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## CO-OPERATION. PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

People whose notion of co-operation is associated with the "divi" store regard it as an ideal "principle" invented or discovered by the Utopian forerunners of scientific Socialism; as opposed to competition, another "principle," which they seem to imagine was invented by capitalist economists.

Marx, however, showed that co-operation in its various forms, has formed the basis of social existence from time immemorial; while competition was the outcome of the break-up of certain old, narrow forms of co-operation which in course of time proved inadequate to the needs of society. The special form of co-operation in existence at any given time has depended upon the degree of development in the means and methods of gaining a living.

The earliest form of co-operation known to us was the hunting pack, which prevailed when human beings depended upon the flesh of animals for food and upon their skins for clothes and shelter. Under these conditions only the crudest arts and crafts could develop and such division of labour as existed was based upon differences of age and sex.

Even after the domestication of animals, the nomadic character of life placed obvious restrictions upon economic development but with the discovery of tillage and the invention of the plough and the adoption of settled habitations, more complex forms of society arose. The domestication of women was followed by the domestication of men; in other words, chattel-slavery was established.

On this basis arose the ancient Empires of which Rome was the last and greatest.

Henceforth division of labour became a marked feature in social life. For some considerable time the class of free citizens pursued various crafts in addition to the main art of husbandry; but by degrees these became the occupations of slaves whose masters spent their time in the pursuit of warfare, politics, sport, art and science, and, eventually, debauchery. Thus, the first historical form of society was based upon compulsory co-operation i.e., the co-operation of slaves to produce wealth and luxury for a class of cultivated idlers.

For all the refinement of those who lived by it, however, chattel-slavery was a crude and wasteful method of exploitation. The slave population had no fear of the "sack" and lived at their masters' expense whether busy or idle. They had, therefore, none of that "incentive" to work so prominent in the case of the workers of to-day and so much esteemed by the anti-Socialist.

They required as a consequence extensive and costly supervision which eventually exhausted the Roman State. Undermined by economic causes within, Rome fell before the onslaught of its barbaric foes; and the initiative of historical development shifted to the north and west of Europe, where the foundations of the great feudal kingdoms were laid in serfdom, a more economical form of slavery.

The serfs held sufficient land to provide themselves with a rude maintenance on condition that they spent a certain definite time in cultivating the land of the lord of the manor. The serf was legally bound to the manor and thus compelled to co-operate in the service of his lord. Other classes of free peasants also rendered forms of ser-



vice in the shape of rent in kind or military service, while in the towns the free craftsmen and merchants, organised in guilds, usually held their chartered rights under the "protection" of some overlord. Thus co-operation remained, albeit in a modified, limited and indirect form, the basis of the social order.

Under feudalism, division of labour within society became crystallised into a definite form. A whole hierarchy of classes and sub-classes with clearly defined rights and duties existed in a state of apparent stability; but in the towns was preparing a further advance along the line of division of labour which was destined to sweep feudalism away as patrician rule had been swept before it.

As yet, the workers, whether peasants or craftsmen, had been accustomed to follow their job through from start to finish; they turned out complete articles. Now in the factories of the rising merchant class began the splitting up of the process of labour into its details and the apportioning of each detail to a special labourer. Thus specialised, the workers acquired a greater speed and the quantity of wealth produced increased. Larger numbers of workers were employed in the individual workshop and co-operation took on still another form.

How the merchants developed into full-blown capitalists by the introduction of machinery was recited in last month's issue of this paper. The special point of importance here is the fact that the machine brings still greater numbers of workers into direct co-operation. Whereas in former ages only works of exceptional size such as the building of pyramids, temples, etc., demanded the co-operation of large numbers, now it is the normal thing for such things as clothes, food, boots, etc., to be turned out by concerns employing thousands.

The self-contained life of the village community and the simple co-operation of the mediæval craftsman's family have given place to the gigantic complexity of modern industrialism. Yet there is a point of similarity between these seemingly diverse modes of production. The modern wage-slave, like his forerunners, the serf, and the chattel-slave, is compelled to co-operate in maintaining an idle class—a class now which lacks either the military prowess of the feudal knights or the culture of the Athenian "democracy," but which hires

both force and cunning into its service.

Unlike the chattel-slave, however, the wage-earner is not the personal property of his exploiter; neither is he legally bound to serve him like the serf. Legally he is quite entitled to give notice if he likes starvation, but usually the termination of his employment takes the form of the "sack." That is a refined weapon which the rulers of former ages had not discovered. It has been left to modern society to produce that symptom of social anarchy the landless "freemen," the masterless slaves, viz., the unemployed. They provide indisputable evidence of the wasteful character of the capitalist form of co-operation; and of the fact that the productive forces of society are not being fully utilised.

What then? Have we reached finality? By no means! A new form of co-operation must arise. Its foundations in the workshops are already laid; co-operative production is a fact. Co-operative distribution must be developed to make full use thereof. By that we do not mean the apologetic humbug of the so-called co-operative societies (who exploit their employees like any other capitalist concern). Nor do we mean State or Municipal Trading as advocated by the Labour Party, to which the same objection applies. Piecemeal measures, whether adopted by governments or groups of individuals, are futile when society as a whole has to be dealt with.

Capitalist ownership must be abolished in its entirety as a system. The means of life must be converted into the common property of all. That alone will destroy at once the despotism within the workshop and the anarchy outside. Co-operative production to produce the needs of all in accordance with a social plan democratically administered; the co-operation, not of slaves, but of free men and women. That is the next step in social progress. That is Socialism.

E.B.

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## **WHO WROTE THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO OF 1847?**

In a series of articles contributed to the Socialist Standard in 1911 on anarchism, we referred to the "falsified" *Pages of Socialist History* by W. Tcherkesoff. This brochure contained an attempt by this anarchist writer to show that the Marx and Engels Communist Manifesto of 1847 was a plagiarism of Victor Considérant's "Manifesto of Democracy to the 19th Century."

The accusation against Marx of stealing other people's ideas and writings was so often made and the charges regularly exploded that it was not surprising to find that Tcherkesoff's allegations were groundless. Recently Tcherkesoff died and his anarchist friend Nettlau (the biographer of Bakunin) in an article in "Freedom" (December, 1925) warns the anarchists of the baselessness of Tcherkesoff's charges against Marx.

We quote the following extract from "Freedom's" article by Nettlau:—

Tcherkesoff had the misfortune to make people doubt the seriousness of his other researches when he jumped to the conclusion that the "Communist Manifesto" of 1847-48 was sheer plagiarism on a "Manifesto" by Victor Considérant, published by the Paris Fourierists in 1841 and 1847. I remember the morning when Tcherkesoff, happy as a lark, just returned from Amsterdam, placed before me copies of the "Communist Manifesto" and of Considérant's "Principles of Socialism: the Manifesto of Democracy to the Nineteenth Century" (Paris, Libr. Phalanstérienne, 1847, 157 pp.). He had discovered the latter among Domela Nieuwenhuis' store of old pamphlets; and recognised it as a little book which he had read in Russia over thirty years ago, which the "Communist Manifesto" always recalled to his mind, though he had not been able to trace it during all those years. He placed before me many parallels in the descriptive and critical parts referring to capitalist society, and as Considérant's text, the revised edition of his "Bases of Positive Politics: Manifesto of the Societarian School founded by Fourier" (Paris, La Phalange, 1841, 119 pp.), was the earlier work, Tcherkesoff concluded that Marx and Engels were guilty of outrageous plagiarism, stealing ideas and even the words from Considérant.

I was not struck by this discovery; on the contrary, I felt that Tcherkesoff made a great mistake, and I told him so from the first moment; but all was in vain. With one single exception I never met a person who believed that Tcherkesoff was right in this supposition, but it was felt to be painful not to let him enjoy his discovery which made him so happy. So he published what he considered the proofs of this plagiarism, and later on hunted down

Engels for a similar matter (Buret), overdoing this case considerably, and in general he was convinced that he had made out Marx and Engels to be literary rogues and scamps—in one word, thieves.

He had *not* made out this case; he had only diminished the value put on his other criticism of Marxism which touched very weak spots of that system, but which his Marxist opponents discredited by pointing to the lack of critical judgment shown by the unproven charge of plagiarism.

Those who had the leisure to examine the original publications of the early French, English and German Socialists need not be told that Victor Considérant was an infinitely able social critic of the 30's and 40's, wonderfully apt in describing the effects of capitalism after seeing it at work in that eminently capitalist period, in France and England of that Louis Philippe and early Victorian age. They also know—and can still add to their knowledge by manuscripts of Marx and early writings of Engels which have only quite recently come to light—that these two German Socialists, a decade younger than Considérant, had also since the beginning of the 40's worked harder than most others at philosophical, political, and economic studies, leading them to the outspoken Socialist conclusions which we know. Both they and Considérant were at their best in 1847, and as thoroughly competent Socialist thinkers both parties necessarily described and criticised capitalist society in similar appropriate terms, in the standard technical language of well-informed Socialist writers of that period. What else were they to do? If to-day two Anarchist authors were to write manifestos summing up Anarchist criticism of the State, their texts would necessarily more or less agree, provided each of them refrained from indulging in too personal a style—and from this personal style both Considérant and Marx and Engels refrained in 1847, the latter writing moreover on the basis of previous material, questions, etc., which are known at present in detail, but were not yet unearthed in Tcherkesoff's time. So our comrade's splendid fight against Marxism was somewhat marred by the idiosyncrasy here discussed.

Thus the Anarchists themselves throw overboard one of the most stupid charges ever made against Marx. Those who care to read the pages of George Julian Harney's "Democratic Review" of 1849 can study the articles written by Considérant for that journal and the Utopian, idealist and unscientific language will easily show the difference between Marx the materialist and Considérant the Utopian idealist.

After Engels' death there was discovered the original manuscript of his independent draft of the Communist Manifesto. This



was published in Germany under the title of "The Principles of Communism." It has now been translated into English and published in Chicago.

This draft was made by Engels originally for a programme read to the Paris section of the League of Communists in 1847, and was used later as Engels' individual draft submitted to the London meeting in 1847.

One is struck when reading it with the remarkable agreement in the statement of their ideas by Marx and Engels. A study of Engels' pamphlet shows how ridiculous Tcherkesoff's allegations were.

Apart from Engels' draft, the magazine and polemical writings of both Marx and Engels prior to 1847 shows every student that the later writings were an application of ideas, outlined and suggested in their earlier work.

A. KOHN.

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## WHY SOCIALISTS OPPOSE THE POLITICAL LEVY.

### A REPLY TO A CORRESPONDENT.

"Ilfordian" asks for our comments on a cutting in which figures are given of the numbers of members of various trades unions who claim exemption from the Political Levy. As there is so much confusion surrounding this question, let us first state some of the facts. The Labour Party, which came into existence in order to seek by political means to gain legal protection for trade union funds, derives the chief part of its finances from trade unions. Legally, trades unions may spend on political objects only those amounts which are contributed for this purpose, and those members who do not wish to support the Labour Party can decline to pay the Political Levy. Actually many who pay do so not because of any active sympathy towards the Labour Party, but because they are too indifferent to claim exemption. Knowing this, sections of the Tory and Liberal Parties favour an amendment to the law in order to weaken the Labour Party machine; and the Labour leaders seeing their political careers endangered have voiced their protest with a fervour and degree of indignation such as they never show when capitalist attacks are being directed against the workers.

The Press chooses to pretend that it is a fight between Socialist supporters of the Levy and non-Socialist opponents—a view which is sheer nonsense. The attitude of the Socialist party is plain, and follows from our Declaration of Principles. With the personal squabble between the wire-pullers who control the three parties we are not concerned; all that we need ask is whether support of the Labour party is compatible with our work for Socialism. It is plainly not compatible; hence our open and unqualified opposition to that party along with other parties—Liberal and Tory—which support the private property system. Whatever may be said about the persons or the detailed aims of the Labour party, the inescapable fact is that while they can successfully organise a large part of the working class for non-Socialist objects, Socialism is impossible. No member of the Socialist party would wish or be permitted to give any kind of voluntary assistance to the Labour party. The general position is plain, and the reasons have been and are

continually being given by our speakers and in our literature to show that the position we take up is justified. But in actual practice it is not always possible to avoid helping our opponents, little as we may wish to do so. Anyone who is familiar with the internal organisation and political activities of many trades unions will be quite well aware that money contributed for ordinary "trade" purposes finds its way by various paths to the funds of central and local Labour parties. Much of the time of trade union organisers is spent on political work without any attempt to charge the political funds; money is contributed to such definitely political objects as the maintenance of the "Daily Herald," and against these and other ways of evading the law, the Socialist is helpless at present, even although he obtains exemption from the levy.

It is, however, a matter of little importance. Socialists are as yet a small minority in the trades unions as outside, and must bow to the will of the majority. When we are more numerous we shall be able to make our views prevail, as the Labour party does now—with one important difference. We shall depend on the willing and active support of workers who understand Socialism; we shall not, as does the Labour party, build up an organisation on the illusory strength of thousands of "supporters" who in reality pay the levy because they are too apathetic to refuse.

H.

## WHY SOCIALISM MUST COME.

### A REPLY TO A CORRESPONDENT.

S. Warr, junr. (Southend), asks what reply we would give to the following observation made by a Conservative opponent: "You cannot tell us how Socialism can work even if we desired it, and therefore how can you deal with the social question, etc?"

Answer: This opponent quite fails to understand the case for Socialism because he has placed the problem on its head.

Socialism is not a scheme evolved out of nothing and depending for its acceptance and introduction on our ability to convince the workers that it is "desirable," and that its working will be perfect. On the contrary, it is offered as a practical means of solving certain pressing working-class problems. Capitalism has presented us

with these problems and is making it continually more urgent that the workers should tackle them or find them growing worse; but capitalism has also produced the material and mental means necessary for solving the problems it created.

For instance, in the early days of the present system, the demands of a world market encouraged the development of the means of producing wealth by making possible our modern methods of mass factory production. Capitalism is now unable to dispose of the enormous amount of wealth it can create, markets are overcrowded and permanent unemployment for millions is the result. Unemployment is the problem which capitalism presents and which the capitalist class cannot solve. The Socialist solution is simple, but it could not be put into effect by the present ruling class even if in some way they could become convinced that it was "desirable." The solution is this: Since production for the world market has become a fetter on the production forces, let us abolish production for the market, that is production for sale, and organise production on the basis of use.

Again let us repeat that this is not the abstract idea of Marx or some other genius; it exists and only exists, because capitalism by organising production on something approaching a world basis has laid the foundation for Socialist society.

Finally, it is unpleasant but demonstrably true that the workers will try every scheme—genuine or sheer bluff—that our masters offer, before they will examine the case for Socialism. In fact, if the Conservatives could produce even a semblance of a solution for unemployment and other working-class problems, Socialism might be delayed indefinitely. They do not, because they cannot, and when the workers find this out they will solve their problems in the only way—through Socialism.

(Ed., Com.)

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## A LOOK ROUND.

## THE SKELETON AT THE FEAST.

Capitalist cant usually has a field day at the Lord Mayor's Banquet. After the reams of lying literature scattered broadcast during the war, exhorting us to go and exterminate the "German beasts" and the "Hunnish swine," the following makes fine reading for the cynical philosopher. Mr. A. Chamberlain, proposing the toast of the foreign ministers, threw the following pearl before our masters' one-time "swine":—

My Lord Mayor thanks to your hospitality I have drunk to-night of your loving cup with the German Ambassador. What I have done this evening may our nations do to-morrow. We will work in the spirit of Locarno that the peace of the world may be kept and civilisation recover from the wounds that it has suffered.—(*Times*, November 20th, 1925.)

Admiralty, War, and Air Ministers then responded to the toast, and emphasised the activities of their departments in preparation for peace and for civilisation's recovery. Earl Beattie spoke regretfully:—

It is not the fault of the Admiralty that the impetus of war had added vastly to the complexity of the technique of naval warfare, that new weapons had been evolved and the scope of existing weapons expanded beyond imagination.

Sir Worthington Evans spoke assuringly:—

We had taken some risks which were only justified on the assumption that the Army was up to establishment, well trained and well equipped. He could assure those present that the Army would fulfil all these conditions.

Sir Samuel Hoare spoke in a querulous tone:—

... during the last twelve months our Air Force had been substantially strengthened. The London Auxiliary Air Force squadrons were already in being. ... We are certainly anxious to make the fullest possible use of inventions and discoveries. ... Was the discovery to which generation after generation had devoted its untiring efforts to prove a Frankenstein Monster that would destroy civilisation.

So, seven years after "the war to end war," we have a navy grown beyond imagination, an army ready to jump at any nation's throat, and an air force which, it is hinted, may settle war (and the unemployment problem) for some considerable time by the destruction of civilisation. What cheerful news for the Christian peace cranks, who will continue to mouth peace platitudes until the next war arrives—when they will, as of yore, out-jingo the jingoes. It is also striking confirmation of our claim

that while capitalism lasts the struggle for trade advantages will bring wars and preparation for wars.

Capitalism without armed force is unthinkable. It is a force the working class must politically control before they can achieve emancipation.

The acceptance of the position embodied in our principles is the only sane and safe attitude for the workers.

\* \* \*

## THE GREAT MAN BOGEY.

Born in one of the worst slums in Nottingham and beginning work at nine, Mr. Samuel Ward, a Liberal member for Nottingham City Council, was yesterday elected Sheriff. He was an illustration, he told the Council, of how, under our democratic constitution, the poorest boy could rise by industry, thrift, and sobriety, to the highest positions an important city could offer.—(*Daily Chronicle*, November 10th, 1925.)

The fact that the *Chronicle* gave prominence to the above shows clearly enough that such occurrences are not commonplace. The "Great Man" theorists would have you believe that the long and tedious struggle of mankind through countless unknown generations serves no other purpose than that some may derive an easy existence as Capital's functionaries or henchmen. Capitalism will reward comparative ignoramuses like General Booth or Lloyd George with their wealth and approbation, while a man of Marx's mental calibre, acclaimed by his opponents a genius, was compelled to live half his life in poverty. Throughout the large towns thousands of boys have never had a job since leaving school two or three years ago. The following bears witness to the "splendid opportunities" available for the workers' children:—

Thirty-five per cent. to 40 per cent. of the children who are admitted to school at five years of age bear with them physical defects which could have been either prevented or cured.—(Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer, Board of Education, for 1922, p. 36.)

In 1924 a similar report finds 38 per cent. of the entrants to school in London require medical treatment, and an increase over 1923 in cases of malnutrition.

There is one feature of the findings of the School Medical Service which is very significant. Every year there appears to be the same tide of disease, the same burden of defect requiring treatment.—(Sir Geo. Newman, Annual Report of School Medical Inspection, 1924).—(*Daily Telegraph*, November 14th, 1925.)

Such is our democratic constitution. It would be a lie to say that the bulk of the

workers' children ever have a ghost of a chance to rise from the position in which they are born. Consider the industry and thrift of the Mondys, the Derbys, and the Rothschilds, and then reflect that a capitalist statician has said of the wealth producers: "The poor within our borders to-day are as large in numbers as the entire population of 1867" (Chiozza Money, "Riches and Poverty," p. 52). Such is the reward for the industry and thrift of the workers whose class ignorance keeps them the drudges and the doormats of the capitalist few. The Great Men of to-day are mainly the ones who, by adaptability, can give expression to the requirements of our rulers. Cunning and assertive impudence are surer of a place than that which may be of service to present and future generations. The recent remarks of a popular music-hall artist aptly illustrate the age we live in: "Cater for the scream," said Mr. Billy Merson. "If people screamed at a show, that was the chief point. Some world-famous composers died in poverty, while writers of tripe drove about in motor-cars. If the people want tripe, give them tripe" (*Daily Mirror*, October 26th, 1925).

When all have equal opportunities, there will be some talent or ability worth considering in those who become conspicuous by their achievements. In any case, when the interests of all are alike (as would be the case in Socialist society), those of any individual will be best furthered through society's welfare, and not through the subjection and misery of others, as is the case to-day.

\* \* \*

## A COMIC INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY.

There was a tendency to-day to believe that history must only be studied from the point of view of economics and industry. It was a degraded view of humanity to believe that the poorest had no interest but that of livelihood. The assumption was reactionary. ... The point of view from which to study history was that of love of mankind.—(Lord Eustace Percy, *Morning Post*, November 9th, 1925.)

No doubt hunger appears an absurdity to a well-fed body. That view is also consistent with the idea that it is reactionary for those whose lives are spent in one long battle with poverty to concern themselves with the economics of that poverty.

The gaiety and the luxury of the parasitic capitalist class is only made possible by their monopoly of the wealth the workers

produce. The absurd claim that it is they who exercise "directive ability" is shown not only in death, but in life. Whole-page advertisements recently appeared in the *Times* and the *Daily Telegraph*, inviting "you" to winter at such resorts as Cannes, Mentone, Monte Carlo. Says one: "Spend your winter in the island of Madeira. Winter season from October to May. Society's winter rendezvous." No degradation there, miles from the source of the production of their wealth, where others, members of the working class, exercise all the ability necessary to produce wealth, including that of a directing and organising nature. Degradation!—it is yours, in the gloomy city amid the din, the dirt, and the ceaseless round of toil. No wonder your masters can talk of love of humanity while you pander to their every whim with such sheep-like docility.

Attempt, however, without intelligent class organisation, to threaten the institution of private property, and their sickly words of love will turn to brutal ferocity. Let any worker read a truthful account of the Paris Commune, with its lurid story of the slaughter of the Communards, and they will realise the love that the masters have shown the workers in the past. Paris was literally converted into a charnel house for no greater crime than that the workers attempted to control their own affairs in the most democratic and orderly manner Paris ever knew. Says Lissagary, in "The History of the Commune of 1871":—

The struggle over the Army transformed itself into a vast platoon of executioners. ... A chief of battalion standing at the entrance surveyed the prisoners, and said: "to the right," or "to the left." Those to the left were to be shot. Their pockets emptied, they were drawn up along a wall and slaughtered (p. 383).

Women and children followed their husbands and their fathers, crying to the soldiers: "Shoot us with them!"—and they were shot.

What then will this justice say when these shall be judged, who methodically, without any anxiety as to the issue of the combat, and, above all, the battle over, shot 20,000 persons, of whom three-fourths had not taken part in the fight? (p. 390).

Fellow-workers, by all means study history. You will find it a struggle everywhere between classes. It bears world-wide witness to the Capitalist and Labour lie about our "community of interests," our "common humanity," and shows the antagonism between the exploiters and their victims.



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**The Socialist Standard,**

JANUARY,



1926

**WHAT OF THE FUTURE?****SOCIALISM AND PRESENT TENDENCIES.**

It is usual at this season of the year to review the past and see what hopes the future holds out for us. There is no particular reason for doing this beyond the fact that it is customary. The problems with which we are grappling confront us at all seasons of the year, whether the date be the first of January or the 1st of July.

For the moment we need not worry about the Locarno Pact, which promises Europe peace and larger and more deadly armaments; nor need we worry about the great Irish Agreement which has brought a "settlement" at last to the difficulties of that benighted land, and a civil war between the Northern Government and its Special Police; nor even need we stop to ponder over the Lloyd George Land Scheme, which bids fair to be nipped in the bud by the cheap trips to Canada and Australia, arranged by our benevolent Government which, evidently quite rightly, believes that one can starve as comfortably abroad as at home. These matters can be fittingly discussed in another place.

A disinterested observer, if such could exist, would surely marvel that a proposition, so simple in its main features, as Socialism, receives such scanty attention from the disinherited—the very people to whom it offers so much.

Socialism offers to the hungry the means to fill their stomachs, to the idle congenial work, to the overworked abundant leisure, to those in tatters sound and comely raiment, and to the homeless a roof, society and laughter. Yet the bulk of the people to whom it offers these things treat it with derision or apathy. Why? What are the main obstructions that hinder the majority from accepting the Socialist outlook?

The first important difficulty is that Socialism is something new, it demands a break from the traditional ways of looking at things and it is therefore disturbing to most people. All new ideas and outlooks are disturbing, and that is why they make such slow progress at first. Times are so hard, life is so burdensome, to the majority of people that they desire to escape from its hardships every moment they can. Socialism signifies thinking over these hardships, and consequently it is distasteful. A drink, a heart-to-heart talk, a listen-in, a dance, a football match—these are distractions, moments during which the wear and tear of life are forgotten, consequently they are sought after as the opium of the toiler. The modern worker uses up so much of his mental and manual energy in the service of the employer that he avoids, as much as possible, whatever calls for the exertion of serious thought after the work of the day is done. When once a worker is persuaded to think seriously about his social position, and made to see that there is a gleam of hope, a possible pathway out of his troubles for ever, then the disinclination to consider the new point of view disappears. The difficulty is to get him to start, to overcome the particular form of mental inertia that prevails.

The masters, who have a privileged position to lose, are made well acquainted with these facts, and see that whatever means are available shall be used to throw dust in the workers' eyes. From press, pulpit, and platform the workers are taught that things have always been much as they are to-day, and it is divinely ordained that they will remain so for the future.

The paid advocates of the present order of slavery steer, more or less skilfully, among such disturbing influences as wars, peace treaties, strikes, and the like, with the basic object of keeping secure the profits of the employers and retaining the blind allegiance of employed. Much money and effort is spent in developing welfare

schemes, arranging fruitless commissions of enquiry, and providing amusement and entertainment to absorb harmlessly energies that might otherwise be directed towards the abolition of a privileged class.

For many years a standing menace to capitalist states has been the growing army of unemployed. In England, however, they have at the moment met the difficulty in a way that takes the edge off the menace and spikes the guns of the disgruntled. The much-discussed "dole" at least minimises the danger of bread riots, and its qualifying clauses serve to intimidate many who might otherwise endanger the stability of the system.

Along with this there is a boom in certain of the sciences just now, and knowledge is increasing in the ranks of the intelligentsia (who conduct affairs on behalf of the masters) of the best way to deal with men, individually and in groups, not only for the purpose of increasing the amount of wealth produced per man, but also for the purpose of blinding and misleading the wealth producers as to their true interests.

So far has this latter idea progressed that it has induced, in at least one man of science, a profound gloom. Bertrand Russell in "Icarus" expresses himself as follows on the future outlook:—

The effects of psychology on practical life may in time become very great. Already advertisers in America employ eminent psychologists to instruct them in the technic of producing irrational belief; such men may, when they have grown more proficient, be very useful in persuading the democracy that Governments are wise and good. . . .

More sensational than tests of intelligence is the possibility of controlling the emotional life through the secretions of the ductless gland. . . . assuming an oligarchic organisation of society, the State could give to the holders of power the disposition required for command, and to the children of the proletariat the disposition required for obedience. Against the injections of the State physicians the most eloquent Socialist oratory would be powerless.

Such is the outlook for the future according to one professor.

But Bertrand Russell is not the only one who is gloomy and full of foreboding.

In the latter days of the war and in the period immediately following the Armistice there was a boom in "Red Revolution." Pamphlets were poured out in abundance, and mass meetings were held all over the country. In fact many thought the "revolutionary moment" had come and the day of emancipation was at hand.

Since then there has been a gradual downward tendency. One by one the "heroic" figures, that loomed large in the eye of labour, have stepped off the stage and quietly vanished. The names that are now writ large are not the names of yesterday. Most of the men of yesterday are now completely forgotten, although the false flags they waved have been taken up by those that have stepped into the shoes of the departed. But the doleful cry of "what is the good of it all?" has found favour with multitudes of enthusiastic but misguided people, and there is desertion from the camp of the "Reds" and the whitey Reds.

At the end of the war the promises in the Labour movement were fair, but the accomplishments have been foul.

On the one side the advantages gained whilst labour was at a premium during the war have one by one been given up under the guidance of leaders who took the side of the masters, urging and cajoling workers into accepting lower wages and working harder on the plea of "saving the country from bankruptcy."

On the other side the "success" of Russia was held up as an example of what would be accomplished in this country by methods such as "Soviets of the Streets," strikes, and other action outside of Parliament and in face of a parliamentary majority pledged to support the present state of affairs.

But opportunism, whether of the pale or the lurid red, alike lands us in the quagmire, or the shambles; and the successors of those who promised a "world revolution" by 1921 are now languishing in jail for indulging in wild talk at trade union rates!

Whatever value the work of the Russian Communists may have had in Russia, its general effect upon the movement outside has ultimately been disastrous to the movement towards Socialism, and the full extent of the evil has probably not yet been reached. It was and is a deadening power on educative propaganda. Its failure to redeem its promise has armed the opponents of Socialism with a false argument that they have not been backward in using to the utmost. Russian propaganda has put back the clock of revolution many years. It has accomplished this in five different ways. It has helped the capitalist to maintain an iron dictatorship over the workers. It has spread widely false ideas as to how to accomplish the Social Revolution. By the



failure of its methods, both in Russia and outside, it has driven into despair and apathy some of the most active and valuable elements in the ranks of the working class; it has placed in the hands of our enemies a powerful weapon — illustration — to use against us; and finally it has cleared the ground for the progress of those capitalist hirelings—the labour leaders—whose position was previously being rapidly undermined. Since the Russian Upheaval the reformist Labour Parties have made rapid strides almost everywhere.

But the wave that recedes returns with redoubled force when the tide is coming in—and come in the tide of Revolution surely will and must.

Need we be unduly disturbed then at the apparently slow pace of progress? Not at all. The battle is to the strong, and the strong are they who have the patience to persist in the path that alone leads to victory. It is not enough to have a burst of enthusiasm that fades away if the harvest does not come in a few short years of effort. It is necessary to know that however long and hard the road, it is the *only* road, and there is *surely* the promised land at the end.

When looking back at past revolutions, one is apt to forget that they were the product of years of preparation, and that the forces preparing them were nearest ripening at the moment when the future looked darkest. This was true particularly of the English and French Revolutions, which appear on the surface to have been the sudden and spontaneous uprising of popular passion.

The question so often put by people in moments of pessimism, when bad health or social stress blacken their outlook, "Shall we see Socialism in our time?" is really a superfluous question. One complete answer to it is that the progress towards Socialism is in direct ratio to the amount of effort put in by those who understand and desire it. Another answer is that the unborn generations will have little sympathy for those who abandon the struggle on the slender grounds of their own immediate feelings. Yet another answer is that the servile crew who abandon the struggle under the influence of such a consideration deserve the kicks that are the recompense of slaves. And, finally, who is there with such prophetic vision that he can foretell, with any degree of accuracy worth consideration, how long the

mass of the people will groan under the yoke of slavery in face of a spreading tide of education that neither pulpit, press, platform nor police can stem? Just as a close-kept secret will out some day, so a view such as Socialism, however harshly it may be surpassed, will take root and flourish, often flourishing all the more strongly on account of that very suppression.

In conclusion, we would like to address a few personal remarks to you, who belong to the unconverted. What do you want? Do you love slavery? Do you want your children and your children's children to be born into slavery, making the means for others enjoyment while they toil in poverty and misery? What is the use of toiling, week in and week out, for the sake of a smoke, a drink, and a football match? You make the earth fruitful, the mine and the factory belch forth their riches. But these are not for you who have gained them by the power of your muscles and the fertility of your brains. These riches belong to those who live upon you and bleed you of the product of your labour. They twist your intelligence into channels favourable to their welfare and your ill, and you let them enjoy the things that you have made because they have taught you some great natural law or some unscrutable power has decreed that it shall be so. There is no power outside of custom and the things born of the economic organisation of society, and these are things that you can alter when you will. But to achieve alteration you must rid yourselves of false notions of others superiority, false ideas of a natural order of social privilege, and the pessimism which keeps the servile mark of slavery upon your brow.

### KNOWLEDGE.

The following Books can be obtained from Head Office:—

- Anarchism and Socialism.** Plechanoff. 3/6, paper 1/2.
- Civil War in France.** Marx. 2/9.
- Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844.** Engels. 5/-
- Critique of Political Economy.** Marx. 6/6.
- 18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon.** Marx. 3/6.
- Evolution of Property.** Lafargue. 3/6, limp 1/6.
- Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.** Engels. 3/6.
- Poverty of Philosophy.** Marx. 6/6.
- Revolution and Counter-Revolution.** Marx. 3/6, limp 1/6.
- Social and Philosophical Studies.** Lafargue. 3/6.
- Socialism: Utopian and Scientific.** Engels. 3/6, limp 1/6. *Postage extra.*

## THE SHORTER WORKING DAY.

### ITS ECONOMIC CAUSES AND SOCIAL RESULTS.

During the last hundred years there has been in this country a marked and more or less continuous tendency for hours of work to become fewer. The causes are many and various and the two which receive most attention—trade union organisation and legal restriction—are by no means the only ones of importance. The part played by the technical developments of industry is frequently forgotten as are also the motives which have induced the ruling class to pass their laws limiting hours of employment. As power has throughout the period remained in the hands of members of the employing class, it is plain that no action really damaging to their class interests would be taken by them in the House of Commons; and similarly as controllers of industry they have been well able to adapt themselves to the slightly modified conditions resulting from the existence of Trade Unions as a permanent factor, without loss of profits in the long run.

Shorter hours are, of course, of benefit to the working class, but they have not—in capitalist society—proved an unmixed blessing. Generally speaking, reductions in hours have not been allowed to mean a corresponding reduction in output. The workers have been able and have been compelled to work harder during the smaller number of hours. Not infrequently they have been induced to produce more in the shorter than in the longer working day. They have exchanged exhaustion in seven hours for exhaustion in eight or nine hours and profits have not suffered. Certain outstanding figures like Cadbury and Ford have demonstrated that a six or even five hour day can be made not only a business proposition but more profitable still, but it must be remembered that their methods are dependent on the actual processes of the industries in question as well as on many outside factors not directly controllable by the individual employer. Where the social and educational level and the level of wages are abnormally low, as in Bombay, long hours and degraded conditions are still the rule. Big profits are, from the owners' point of view, a sufficient justification and a reason for leaving "well" alone. Immigrant labourers still work their twelve

hours a day for seven days a week in the oil and steel industries of America and produce profits which are fabulous. A falling off in the supply of cheap labour, a change in the methods of production making it cheaper to use delicate machinery needing skilled and educated workers; these and many other factors may lead to a new organisation based on a shorter working day in these industries. If and when that occurs we can be certain that, as has happened so often in the past, the employers will make a virtue of necessity and parade "philanthropy" as the motive. Up to the thirties of last century it was the practice in most of the coal areas for women to be employed carrying coal in baskets up to the surface. Occasional protests went unheard until the invention of a wire cable made it for the first time cheaper to haul the coal mechanically. The employment of women was then forbidden by Parliament amidst a flood of mutual congratulations among the mine proprietors. What a happy world this is for property owners when benevolence can be exercised not only at no cost, but in combination with increased receipts of good hard cash!

It is difficult for a ruling class not to view other folks' welfare through the rose-tinted spectacles of their own prosperity. We need not be surprised then to find the spokesmen of our masters filled with comfort at the thought of what they believe to be a continued progress in the conditions of our lives. We need not, however, accept unquestioningly their optimistic views on the subject of our hours of work and our holidays.

In spite of changes for the better which admittedly have been made, two important facts need to be weighed on the other side of the scale. The first is that what has been given with one hand has often been taken away with the other, and the second is that at no time, early or late in the history of modern capitalist society, will our conditions compare with those of the more leisurely system out of which capitalism grew.

For the workers factory production meant the evil of frantic and unceasing labour for long hours such as would have



seemed intolerable to an independent craftsman accustomed to choose his own times for work and rest. The new moneyed class, intoxicated by the wonderful opportunities of amassing fortunes, usually had no inclination themselves to make their money the means to a life of leisure and culture. To their evangelical conception money-making was man's first duty and the earthly life not a place for play. How much less, then, were they disposed to let the need of the workers for rest and recreation stand between them and their profits.

In spite, therefore, of more recent tendencies, we are, generally speaking, worse off than before the advent of industrial capitalism; and the more highly developed countries are worse off than the more backward ones.

London, we find, has fewer statutory holidays than any other city in the world—6 against 10 in New York and 12 in Australia and Germany. ("Bank and Public Holidays." Guaranty Trust Coy.) The really marked difference shows itself, as we would expect, in a comparison with those countries (mainly Catholic) which have been less influenced by industrialism. When and where the Catholic Church and the Feudal organisation to which it was so well adapted, survived the attacks of capitalism, the numerous Church holidays have retained their traditional hold. Thus Poland, in spite of reductions in 1924, still has 34 holidays, as does also Greece. Yugoslavia, more backward still, has no fewer than 40 public holidays each year. With the 52 Sundays the fortunate workers have approximately one day off in four. As these countries come increasingly into the sphere of factory production for the world's markets, the capitalist class will find so much leisure for the workers incompatible with factory "discipline" and the fulfilment of contracts. More and more sacrifices will be called for in order that profits may not suffer. "Bolshevik" Russia's progress from semi-feudalism to Capitalism has been marked by the same abolition of the holidays formerly kept in accordance with the customs of the Church.

What the workers enjoyed in the Middle Ages can be seen from the following.

Mr. G. Townsend Warner says of the 15th and 16th centuries ("Tillage, Trade and Invention," p. 71):—

Besides Sundays, all Saints' days and feasts of the Church, were days on which work was

forbidden, and on the eve of these holidays only half-a-day's work was done. Very likely the working man's year was not more than 260 days; perhaps even less.

As for hours of work he says (p. 113):—

Dinner was at one, and few did any work after it; but all, whether artisan or merchant, shopkeeper or Government official, began early, often at 5 or 6 in the morning. . . .

Thorold Rogers ("Six Centuries of Work and Wages," p. 542) gives the average working day in the 15th and 16th centuries as "one of 8 hours' work," and points out that the worker who in 1884 was "demanding an eight hours' day in the building trades is simply striving to recover what his ancestor worked four or five centuries ago." It is worth noting that according to Mr. Leone Levi, whose opinion Rogers quotes (p. 543): "the average amount of hours in the building trade . . . was 55" in 1867. Such is progress!

Conditions in Germany would appear to have been even better than those in this country.

Belfort Bax, in summing up the social status of the worker about the year 1500, says:—

In some cases the workman had weekly gratuities under the name of "bathing money," and in this connection it may be noticed that a holiday for the purpose of bathing once a fortnight, once a week, or even oftener, as the case might be, was stipulated for by the Guilds, and generally recognised as a legitimate demand (German Society at the close of the Middle Ages, page 212).

It is interesting to know what took place before capitalism came into being, but this is as nothing compared with the opportunities of leisure that capitalist development has now made possible. Capitalism, while robbing the workers of the leisure they had, has created powers of production which, if properly utilised, would enable us to work less than half the time we do now. The census of production is our evidence for this assertion, in disclosing how many fit persons are either engaged in useless or wasteful occupations only necessary under this system, or are, like so many of the members of the propertied class, entirely idle.

The five million persons belonging to the master class produce nothing. If these contributed workers in the same ratio as the rest of the population, there would be another 2,000,000 workers available for production.

The number of men removed from useful

labour by the coercive forces are roughly: the army, 250,000; the navy and air force, 130,000; police and prison staffs, 70,000; while there are more than 60,000 clergymen chasing the shadow instead of wrestling with the substance.

These groups of people frittering away their energies either from choice or compulsion, total over 2½ millions in addition to the unemployed.

But this is not all. According to the census returns for 1921, 81,347 commercial travellers were scouring the country in England and Wales alone, with no better object than to snatch trade from rivals; and 539,686 male and 426,475 female clerks and typists were toiling, to a great extent uselessly, in business offices. The streets teem with canvassers and agents and door-to-door distributors. A dozen bakers' carts chase each other over the same ground; a dozen butchers' carts and milk carts do the same.

Over 1½ million persons (excluding clerks) are employed in Commerce, Finance and Insurance.

These millions who neither toil nor spin, are waited upon by thousands upon thousands of servants and flunkies, who add nothing to the national wealth. The railways call for numerous booking-clerks to serve out tickets, and collectors to punch them and collect them. The buses and trams are overrun with spying inspectors.

The number of people in England and Wales engaged in 1921 in the building and allied trades; mining and quarrying; metal, engineering and shipbuilding; textile, tailoring, boot and shoe trades, food, drink and tobacco; electrical apparatus making and fitting, etc.; wood and furniture trades; and agriculture, was only 7,615,198—and these figures included all persons over 12, and employers as well as the unemployed.

Nearly the whole of the wealth of the country is produced by the people engaged in these trades, whose numbers equalled about half the male population of the country between the ages of 16 and 60, at the time the figures were taken. So, after balancing the wealth producers in other trades, and those engaged in transport, against the unemployed and employers in these, it seems reasonable to claim that the whole of the nation's wealth can be produced by the male population between 16 and 60

years of age working half the time they do now.

Another striking illustration of the productive powers of the working class is offered by the experience of the war. In 1917 and 1918, no less than four million fit men were in the forces. Only 1,600,000 additional women workers were employed in industry, yet it was possible to maintain the supply of essential goods and services, and at the same time produce in colossal quantities the weapons of destruction for British and Allied armies. Our "productive powers actually increased." ("Triumph of Nationalisation," p. 137.)

These powers of production exist and could rapidly be improved upon but for capitalist private ownership. Great possibilities of leisure are out of your reach only from this same cause. They will come within your reach only after the winning of Socialism, and to this end we invite your help and co-operation in spreading the knowledge of Socialist Principles. H.

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## HOW WORKERS ARE DISPLACED THE DIESEL PASSENGER LINER'S LESSON.

The last word in labour-displacing machinery on the high seas is the s.s. "Gripsholm," Swedish-American liner of 23,500 tons displacement, the first big diesel propelled passenger boat to put into New York harbour. She spells the coming revolution in marine transportation that will leave thousands of engine-room men on the beach without jobs. Her first engineer told me what her twin Burmeister & Wain internal combustion engines could do with a force of only 39 men:—

"It would require at least 150 men to get the same 22,000 horse-power and 17½ knots an hour with the old coal burning system," he said. "And about 75 men with an oil burning steamship. We need only 11 engineers, with 28 oilers, machinists and other engine-room attendants. Think what that means."

It means a lot to the seamen's unions, as half to two-thirds of the firemen, oilers, water tenders, wipers and coal passers find their jobs gone. And their jobs are going fast. Sweden is in the van of diesel construction with 85 per cent. of the tonnage now on her yards of that type, but the world as a whole runs over 60 per cent. Bethlehem Steel already has two 22,000-ton freighters, built in Hamburg, on the ore run from Chile to Sparrow's Point, Maryland and the U.S. Shipping Board is fitting 14 ships with diesel engines.

The staff reduction is not entirely confined to below decks. Above, fewer deck hands are needed, for the diesel boat has neither smoke nor soot. The two stacks on the Gripsholm are dummies, concessions to prevailing fashions of marine architecture. The crude oil used as fuel is not burned under boilers, but is exploded under high pressure, much as gasoline is exploded in automobiles. Other savings to the management, besides those in wages, are affected, for the diesels use only half the oil of an oil-burning steamship. And this in turn, means a saving in cargo space, added to the cargo space gained by the elimination of the fire-room and boilers.

On this new smokeless liner you see electricity carried to the fustest point it has gained on the water. Even the winches, or donkey engines that work the cargo, are electrically driven and the cooking and heat-

ing comes from the same agency. There is less vibration and more cleanliness but for the workers the basis grievance of low wages remains—something like \$40 a month, in American money, for the average engine-room man below the rank of engineer and about \$52 up for the latter. And on these wages when the worker has made a few expenditures in port he is broke again and ready to ship out again on another low wage voyage.

("Federated Press," New York.)

## HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

CLYNES SAYS, "WORK HARDER."

Mr. J. R. Clynes, M.P., speaking at Hull, said, the question whether British workmen were doing their best or were as willing to work as were their fathers had to be answered with reserve and qualifications.

On the whole the British workman was as good at his job as any workman throughout the world. There might be some who harboured the thought that the less they did to-day the more they would have for to-morrow, but no workman ever harboured a more mistaken notion.

Restriction of that sort could only lessen the buying power of their wages.

High wages could not be paid on low production, and the best course for British workmen was to accept the doctrine of high efficiency and high production. The workmen's greatest enemy was scarcity, and it was the greatest opportunity for the profiteer.—("Evening News," Nov. 13, 1925.)

## MARX v. CHRIST.

"During his long rest in the Welsh Hills this summer, Rev. Thos. Phillips, of Bloomsbury, has been examining carefully all the alternatives to Christianity in setting the world right. The only one that has greatly impressed him is that of Karl Marx, and he believes the battle of the future lies between Marxian Materialism and Christian Idealism."—("Christian World," Sept. 24, 1925.)

Our nonconformist divine omits to tell us what this Christian idealism has been doing for 1900 years.

A. K.

## CAPITAL'S AUGEAN STABLE.

We do not profess a special indignation over the degrading sex relations Capitalism begets. We fail to see that the degradation of armies of women in this respect is worse than that of their sister domestics or of those in the Jam Factory, the Mills, or the Millinery and Dressmaking sweat dens. The recent Morriss case is an instance of the contempt in which our Masters hold the Workers and serves to emphasise our claim that social evils have their being in class domination.

It was the necessity of obtaining a living that placed these hapless girls—and children—in the toils of this wealthy rouse. The evidence showed that the dazzle and display of wealth coupled with threats of dismissal, served to weaken the resistance of his Working Class victims in order that he might gratify such desires as a wealthy idler would consider it an impertinence to question. It may be claimed that such cases are unusual, but disclosures made on past occasions, together with the evidence forthcoming as a result of recently raided West End night clubs, show that there is an organised "traffic" drawing its clientele from those in the "best social positions." Society people crowding the divorce courts bear striking witness to the words of Marx, written over 80 years ago:—

Our Bourgeois not content with having the wives and daughters of their proletarians at their disposal, not to speak of common prostitutes, take the greatest pleasure in seducing each others wives (Communist Manifesto).

It is interesting to note the difference in sentences passed upon Morris and his accomplice, and that upon a man and woman for burglary with violence reported in the same issue of the "Daily News" (18-12-25). The latter appealed unsuccessfully against seven and three years' penal servitude respectively, the man to receive twenty lashes with the cat. In the latter case the violence consisted of gagging and binding with threats, but it was a crime against property, and it is well known in legal circles that the punishment for such crimes is relatively greater than that for crimes of other natures. Even the smug "Daily News" Editorial (Ibid) says "the contrast between the two sentences constitutes a challenge to the common sense and to the moral sense of the community." The truth is that it is the contrast between the standards that exist in private property society.

Labour Leaders like Mr. J. H. Thomas ought to display great moral indignation considering that when Colonial Secretary he justified the procuring of native girls for the use of the navy in the brothels of Hong Kong on the grounds that it would afford protection for European white women. We wonder how he and his Capitalist friends would have liked their own daughters to suffer a like fate or how they would have liked them to be protected by a "white man" as was the fate of these working class girls in the Morriss case. Only the Social Revolution can free women, like men, from economic servitude with its consequent evils. Then no woman will need to sell her sex and no man will have power to coerce her affection. With a ruling class whose mentality is circumscribed by the buying and selling nature of their plundering system, relations of sex cannot be understood by them beyond those that exist as a result of the present private property basis of society. Like the Christians, they treat such subjects either as unclean, or with hypocritical silence. The Free Love of mutual affection that must arise as a result of the removal of property and class domination is therefore ever an enigma to our would-be moral reformers. MAC.

## CURIOSITIES.

A gem hath fallen from the lips of one of our "great" men, and we must hasten to put it in a suitable setting lest it escape the notice of posterity.

One, Joynson-Hicks, speaking in the House of Commons on the 17th of December did give utterance to the following: "So far as Joynson-Hicks and Co. is concerned, I was, of course, senior partner, but I have nothing to do with the management of the business." (reported by the "Daily News," 18-12-25).

Verily the ways of our great men of business are strange; they "direct" in a manner that requires neither their presence nor assistance! GILMAC.

## S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

### LONDON DISTRICT.

- Sundays:** Finsbury Park, 3 p.m.  
Clapham Common, 3 p.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 7.30 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m.
- Mondays:** Clerkenwell, Gurnault Place, 8 p.m.  
Islington, Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.
- Thursdays:** Hackney, Queens Road, Dalston, 8 p.m.
- Fridays:** Clerkenwell, Gurnault Place, 8 p.m.  
West Ham, Water Lane, Stratford, 7.30 p.m.
- Fridays:** Leyton, James Lane, nr. Leyton Stn., 7.30 p.m.



**SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road. Discussion last Thursday in month. Open to all.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Communications to E. Jesper, 74 Murdoch-rd., Birmingham. Branch meets A.E.U. Institute, Spiceal-st., every Saturday.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions every Wednesday at 8.45 p.m.—all invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to A. Jacobs, Sec., 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at 141 Bow-rd.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Andrew Porter, 12a, Kings-rd., Portobello.

**GLASGOW.**—Communications to Sec., J. Higgins, 816, Rutherglen-rd., Oatlands, Glasgow.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Saturdays, 7 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare Street, Hackney. Discussions after Branch Business. Communications to Secretary at above address.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., W. Rowney, 43, Paddock St., Hanley, Staffs. Open to all.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to W. Baker, 35 Alma-st., Kentish Town, N.W.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., 88, Dunedin-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Tuesday. Public invited.

**MANCHESTER.**—The Sec., 28, Peter St., High-town, Manchester. Branch meets Clarion Café, Market St., 2nd and 4th Wednesday in month, at 8.30 p.m.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Communications to Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Sec., A. Yeomans, 15, University-rd., Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 17, Antil-road, Broad Lane, Tottenham, N.17. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce-grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to S. E. Williams, 85, Park-road, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at 162, High Street, Watford.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford-rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## PROSPERITY AND "DIVIDING-UP."

In spite of the testimonies, plain to the eye of the beholder who observes intelligently, most people do not really grasp the immensity of modern production. When the Socialist puts forward his plea for the common ownership of the means of wealth production he is sometimes greeted with the statement that if all the wealth produced was divided among the whole of the people, the workers would receive little more than they do at present owing to the small number of those who are very wealthy and the multitude of those who are poor. Quotations are given from economic "authorities" who assert that if the wealth of the rich, or the total income of the whole of the people were "divided up" the result would only amount to an extra pound or two each. The insignificance of the amount is then paraded as a demonstration of the unpractical and delusive nature of Socialist proposals.

Although "dividing up" has no place in the Socialist philosophy, and our case, from the point of view of wealth, is built upon modern productive *capacity* rather than the actual amount of wealth at present produced, yet it is still possible to build up a strong position even on the ground of what is actually produced. The great war furnished us with unanswerable evidence on this side.

Captain B. H. Liddell Hart, dealing with the cost of the war in his little book, "Paris—the Future of War," makes the following statement:—

"For this country alone it reached a cost of £8,000,000 daily. Our total war expenditure was nearly ten thousand million pounds." (page 10.)

There are roughly fifteen million families

in this country. Taking this and the above figures, a little arithmetical calculation gives us an interesting result. Ten thousand millions for four years is two thousand five hundred millions a year; and this divided by fifteen millions is, roughly, a hundred and sixty-six pounds a year per family, or more than three pounds a week. Modern production, then, is so prolific that this country was able, literally, to throw down the drain for four years the equivalent of three pounds a week per family, and yet produce enough to feed, clothe and house the civil population during the whole of that time and even enable war profiteers to accumulate vast fortunes!

Unreflecting people may raise objections to the view here set forth on the ground that the war was financed, to a great extent, by credit, and brought in its wake a National Debt ten times the size of the pre-war debt. In reply to this, it may be well to point out that credit will not fill empty stomachs or the cannon's hungry mouth. Wealth to the full value was actually *produced*. An army of approximately four millions was fed, clothed and supplied with munitions of war; munition workers were fed, clothed and housed; and the rest of the civil population were fed, clothed and housed, during those four years of comedy and tragedy.

The professional economist who claims to "prove" that modern production is incapable of meeting with ease the needs of the whole population, can only do so by playing tricks with figures, an old and oft-used method by the special pleaders for those who rule.

There is another type of special pleader who is constantly urging the



worker to work hard, work long, and work cheaply in order that goods may be produced in greater abundance so that there will be more to "divide." The theory being that cheap wares flooding the market will "stimulate" industry and bring work to the workless and more wages to those working. There has been a minor boom in this stuff lately (I learn that it has also invaded the columns of the "Daily Herald"), and America has been held up as a kind of El Dorado of hard work, peace and prosperity for workers and masters.

As the information is both interesting and conflicting, I will give some specimens.

The New York correspondent of the "Evening Standard" (16. 12. 25.) writes rapturously, "All classes in the country are saving money and making investments in stocks and bonds"; Trade Unionism as a challenge to Capitalism is practically dead; "the leaders of the American trade-union movement have long recognised that if they kill the golden goose of financial leadership, they must go without the advantages of high wages"; class antagonism is breaking down and the United States is well on the way to demonstrating that "Capitalism is its own justification and is the most effective economic system to ensure general prosperity." The New York Correspondent concludes with the remarks that, "The necessity for trade union threats to secure higher wages is disappearing fast from American industrial relationships. . . . So improved machinery finds no obstacles among the working men, who see in every time-saving device the possibility of more money to themselves, if not immediately, yet in the measureable future."

So writes the New York Correspondent, and I must say I am "drawn" by his touching reference to the "golden goose of financial leadership." A golden goose must be a dead thing, and utterly different from the American goose that lays the golden eggs.

Two days after reading the New York Correspondent's article, I was brought up with a jerk by another article in the same paper, but in the columns headed "A Londoner's Diary" (18. 12. 25.), and this is what "A Londoner" said:—

"It is too much our custom to believe that wage disputes are indigenous to this country, and that no other peoples are affected by labour troubles."

"I am advised from New York that a first-class industrial crisis is rapidly maturing in that city, as a consequence of a general increase in prosperity. Fifty trades, representing some 120,000 mechanics and labourers, are asking for new wage contracts for the coming year."

"Of these some thirty-seven trades demand increases varying from 50 cents. to four dollars a day, which would mean for the year a total increase of the wages bill of 80 million dollars, or 20 million pounds, in the industries affected."

"The employers, however, are disinclined to consider these demands."

"A typical demand is that of the building trades, who ask for an average wage increase of 14 per cent. There is still, of course, plenty of time for negotiation, but the means for a settlement do not appear favourable."

Here is contradictory information which suggests that the amicable relations praised by the New York Correspondent partakes of the stuff of which dreams are made. But there is a point of agreement between the two which it would be wise to make a note of—there is prosperity in America whether the American workers have a part in it or not.

The Washington correspondent of the Sunday "Observer" (10. 1. 26.) also has something to say on this subject. He writes of American prosperity in even stronger terms. He says:

"There was never in any country in any time such a prodigal production of goods, or such a wide diffusion of them." . . . "America has not only escaped the post-war debacle, but has gone on to unparalleled prosperity." . . . "In America, organised labour is so fully committed to the principle which looks with suspicion upon any limitation on individual output, and which favours the largest output by each man, on the theory that the more goods produced the more there will be to divide."

The correspondent of the "Observer" explains American prosperity by the economies, mechanical short-cuts, standardisation, and other devices that have "made Henry Ford's automobile factory a model for the maximum output with the greatest economy of labour," and "America has just seen a combination of conditions that defies orthodox political economy: lowering costs and prices of goods, accompanied by higher wages for labour."

The last quotation knocks the props away from the case built up by employers in this country who contend that England

cannot compete in the international market on account of high prices due to relatively high wages. It is not the work of the low-paid coolie that is threatening English industry so much as the low-priced product of the high-priced American workman. The railwayman, the shipyard worker, and the coalminer would be wise to bear this in mind when fighting wage reductions because American high wages (whether true or false) is boosted by the papers that publish matter serving the interests of the employer.

The "Daily News" (22. 1. 26.) publishes extracts from a report by two young British engineers, who have recently toured America, on the conditions that have brought about American prosperity. They also support the high wages—low prices view as a lesson to European nations.

But to return to the main point—the suggestion that cheapening productive methods brings as a result a greater production of goods and consequently more to divide with greater prosperity for everybody.

It requires very little thought to dispel this pleasant phantasy.

The absolute ideal aimed at by industry is a future when one man can, by pressing a button, set in motion the machinery that will automatically perform all the functions necessary to produce what will meet the needs of the whole world without the help of another labourer. The greater the productivity of machinery and the economy of labour the nearer industry approaches to this ideal. That is to say, that fewer and fewer workers are required to attend to the needs of the world. Given the capitalist method of production, under which the means of production and the products are owned by the employers, it is surely obvious that, after a certain limit has been passed, the greater the productivity of machinery the more workers will be thrown out of work whose labour has been "saved." How will they stand in the division of wealth? As they will not be receiving any wages they will have no means with which to buy—unless it be the unemployment dole! So that the future of industry would appear to present a picture of growing prosperity in which wage earners tend to decline and dole receivers tend to increase. A beautiful picture of prosperity!

GILMAC.

## THE SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST.

"As many more individuals of each species are born than can possibly survive; and as consequently there is a frequently recurring struggle for existence, it follows that any being, it vary however slightly, in any manner profitable to itself under the complex and sometimes varying conditions of life will have a higher chance of surviving and will thus be 'naturally selected.'" Introduction to "The Origin of Species," C. Darwin.

This generalization in Darwin's epoch-making work, the result of a lifetime of study of the evolution of organic life, can with equal force be applied to the evolution of the organism known as Society. Modern capitalist society—the outcome of many thousands of years of development—depends upon the individual and collective effort of the workers. The sum total of all these efforts results in the production and distribution of all those things which provide the comforts and wants of modern civilization.

The millions of unemployed workers throughout the world are perfectly conscious of a desire to use their energies, their manifold capabilities, to this end, but they are unable to find a suitable opportunity. It is obvious that, in order to live, mankind is forced to make such efforts as will wrest from mother earth those things which will satisfy his needs. The earth is ready to hand—but!—and there's the rub—the unemployed worker finds himself obstructed by a code of laws and regulations which says, in effect, that the land belongs to various individuals—a distinct and separate class in society. It is the nature of this legal code, this property right in the private ownership and control of the source of the means of life which the workers have to enquire into. It comes to this, therefore, that by a generalization similar to the one made by Darwin quoted above, the organism known as society can be divided, in the main, into two classes:—

1. The class who possess but do not produce—the property-owning master class, and
2. Those who produce but do not possess—the propertyless working class.

The socialist, therefore, may be said to vary from the rest of the members of his class, as a result of a consciousness of this division of society into classes. Let us now



examine in what way such variation makes for ultimate survival of himself and his class.

The socialist, being class-conscious, recognises that there is a constant struggle going on between the two classes referred to. He probes into the nature of this struggle, and as a result of his study of the economic conditions and the political history of capitalism, is forced to the conclusion that it is through their control of the political machinery of the state that the master class—the owners of the means of life—are able to subject the working class to their wage-slavery position.

The long history of the struggle which has taken place between these two classes is admirably expressed in the life-long labours of Karl Marx, in whose writings is revealed the nature of the struggle and the historical mission which confronts the working class, so far as the future reorganisation of society is concerned.

Inherent in the capitalist system is an antagonism, a conflict of interests—the class struggle. Leaving aside for the moment periods of trade depression, when such conflicts of interests between the workers and the masters is glaring and needs little illustration, let us examine the conditions when so-called peace prevails. Even then the struggle still goes on; the struggle on the part of the worker to obtain as much by the sale of his labour power as he can get, and the struggle on the part of the master to buy that labour power at the lowest possible rate. Employers of labour compete for the world's markets. To do this successfully, up-to-date machinery, the very latest equipment and industrial organisation, efficient workers, are essential for this success.

Further, the workers also compete with one another for jobs. Non-unionists, black-legs, the introduction of women and juveniles into industry, all tend to keep the workers' wages, in the aggregate, down to the bare cost of subsistence.

Despite all these obvious facts, we have the Rt. Hon. J. H. Thomas, the railwaymen's leader, making the following observations in a speech on the occasion of the opening of the Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the British Empire at the Guildhall, London:—

"Cheap labour is bad, but while we demand the best, we should be in a position to give

the best in return. That can only be done by sweeping away that absurd and dangerous doctrine that the Empire belongs to one class or section of the community. Nothing is more dangerous than that doctrine of class hatred" (*Daily Herald*, 2nd July, 1924).

If the worker will compare the above with our brief analysis of the workers' position, he can only come to one of two conclusions, either that Mr. J. H. Thomas is a fool or a deliberate distorter of the facts of every-day working-class experience.

Utterances like these are typical of modern labour leaders. They are attempts to blind the minds of a credulous working-class following, in the hope of reward from the ruling class, when the plums of office are being distributed. By such servile conduct do labour leaders endeavour to prove their fitness to survive—at the expense of the working class.

It would be interesting, however, to know why J. H. Thomas considers the doctrine of "class hatred" so dangerous. He and his kind conveniently forget to explain their reasons. On the other hand, is it likely that a recognition by the workers of their class position tends to make them love the system which crushes all their aspirations? Of course not. The more the workers become convinced of the nature of the class struggle, so will their respect and reverence for their "betters" dwindle, and to that extent will their worship of trade union and political leaders diminish.

In conclusion, therefore, we repeat that the fundamental principle of Socialism is based on the recognition of the class struggle. The workers will prove their fitness to survive by associating themselves with the work of the Socialist Party. That work consists in resolutely organising for the dethronement of Capitalism and the establishment of Socialism. Naturally this work falls upon those who will benefit therefrom, i.e., the working class.

Help to prove the fitness of your class to survive! "Eat or be eaten"; that is the issue.

O. C. I.

#### NOTE.

Wholesale and Retail Agents for Socialist Standard

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## THE GREAT DISCOVERIES AND THEIR ECONOMIC EFFECTS.

When civilisation was concentrated round the Eastern end of the Mediterranean, Phœnician ships from Syria pushed further and further westward, trading and colonising as they went, and preventing the too credulous Greeks from intruding by spreading tales of the quite mythical sea monsters they had met on the voyage. They eventually reached the Atlantic and coasted south-west round Africa, and tradition has it that their ships made call at Britain for supplies of Cornish tin. Of this we are not sure and we know still less about the Scandinavian voyager, Leif, son of Eric the Red, who it is said reached America in the year 1,000.

But in 1492 Christopher Columbus, fortified by nothing more definite than his inability to believe "that the sun shines upon nothing, and that the nightly watches of the stars are wasted on trackless seas and desert lands," sailed westward across the Atlantic to look for a route round the world to India and the East, and hit upon the West Indian Islands. This was the era of the Great Discoveries.

Five years later, after half a century of persistent Portuguese exploration of the West African coast, Vasco de Gama succeeded in passing the Cape of Good Hope and in opening direct sea communication with India. By 1500 the Portuguese were settled in Brazil and there followed innumerable explorations from end to end of the Atlantic shores of North and South America. In 1520 Magellan had rounded the southern tip of South America and found a sea route to Eastern Asia, although the voyage of over two years cost the lives of Magellan and half his crew. We read of repeated attempts during the succeeding centuries to find sea passages to the North of America and Asia.

To understand the effects of this era of expansion, we must consider the economic condition of Europe in the preceding centuries, and its relations with the East.

Over the greater part of Europe "natural economy" as distinct from "money economy" still prevailed. That is to say, food and clothing were in the main produced for

use in the immediate neighbourhood; trade, and the use of money, were comparatively rare, and limited to luxury goods. The exceptions were the great trading and manufacturing towns which had sprung up at convenient centres for the collection and distribution of commodities, and on the most important land or sea trade routes.

The sea trade was in the hands of merchants of Genoa and Venice and other Italian towns, and of the Hanse towns in the Baltic. The Hanse traders dealt chiefly with Russia, Scandinavia, and the Baltic lands, and were interested in raw materials such as wool, which they obtained from England, corn which they supplied to many Mediterranean nations, and fish.

The Genoese had a monopoly of the South Russian trade which came overland round the Black Sea bringing silks and spices from India and China. The spices were valued highly because it was only by their liberal use that the meat of those times could be made really palatable.

The Venetians, too, dealt in spices, drugs and other Eastern products transported by caravans which entered Egypt from the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. These spices were grown in the East Indian Islands and reached the termini of the caravan routes in the ships of Arab traders who held undisputed sway over the Indian Ocean.

Both Genoa and Venice brought their luxury wares to depots such as Antwerp, where exchange took place with the Hanse merchants. Overland routes ran up the Rhone to Paris; over the Alps and down the Rhine; and from Venice via Augsburg and Nuremberg to Hamburg and other Baltic centres.

Both groups of merchants made regular calls at English Ports, and the bulk of European trade was in their hands. It was this trade which gave political importance to the cities and was the cause of their rivalries. The chief source of the merchant's wealth and the goal of every adventurer's ambition was the East, which up to that time had not been directly and easily accessible to Europe.



During the 15th century, owing to the advance of the Turks into Europe, the whole of this trade was endangered. In 1453 Constantinople fell to them and the Genoese routes were altogether barred; while the Turkish approach to Egypt threatened also the activities of the Venetians. It was the Turkish invasion which was the immediate cause of the desire to reach India by sea, and consequently of the great expansion during the 16th century.

The marked increase of exploration had the effect, which was of great importance afterwards, of giving rise to a new tradition of more daring and skilful seamanship in Portugal and Spain and later in Holland and England. The discoveries caused the shifting of the centres of commerce from the Mediterranean to those countries with an Atlantic coast; the drying up of the overland routes to the Baltic and the consequent decline of the Mid-European cities; the abandoning of much of the caravan communication with Asia; and the sapping of the vitality of Venice and Genoa. Spain, Portugal and England were thus encouraged to build their own mercantile fleets.

The Portuguese established an Indian Empire and gained control of the East Indian spice islands and a monopoly of the traffic in the Indian Ocean. The amount of trade increased enormously, but the distribution of the wares in Europe was conducted and financed by the Dutch, who obtained the bulk of the profits and laid the foundations of their own later financial supremacy. It was the Portuguese monopoly of the Indian Ocean and the endorsement of their claim which they obtained from the Pope, that induced the Spaniards to finance Columbus in his attempt to reach India by sailing westwards. The discovery of America was, however, not used by Spain to develop commerce. The finding of gold and silver and the extensive mining of the latter which began in 1530 enabled Spain to prosper for a while on a different basis. She attempted to make the new world merely a source of bullion monopolised by her, and to keep this bullion inside the mother country. The result of the monopoly and exclusion of foreign traders was to incite Dutch and English freebooters to attack the bullion ships, and the bullionist policy at home was equally disastrous in the long run. There was a world rise in prices as a result of the inflow of gold and silver, but instead of allowing the food

and other industries to profit and grow by satisfying the big demand from the new colonies, the sheep-owning families who were the ruling class deliberately hampered them.

Then, owing to an anti-foreign agitation, due to a mistaken notion that the presence of foreigners in the country had caused the rise in prices, the Government expelled those who had been their best artisans and merchants and without whom industry declined. Spain then became largely dependent on supplies of fish, corn, and manufactured goods from Holland and England, this again stimulating the economic development of the latter.

The rise in prices had a generally quickening effect on trade outside of Spain, and not only did this affect the trading nations and their industries, but it materially speeded up the introduction of money in place of "natural economy." This was the immediate cause of the peasant war in Germany in 1525, owing to bitter disputes about the money value of labour services. The war set Germany back economically, and the other advanced nations benefited by the removal of a rival. The working out and decline of her mining industries also affected Germany adversely. Accumulation of capital, which was rendered easier by the abundance of gold and silver, led to the opening of new commercial and industrial enterprises in the East and the New World as well as in Europe.

This growth of capital, the consequent greater power of the merchants, and the new contact with the non-Christian East were also the causes of a revival of slavery and had a depressing effect on the condition of the peasants and wage earners in Europe itself.

England rapidly changed from a wool exporting to a wool manufacturing nation and before the end of the 16th century her commerce was largely carried on in English ships; both the Venetian and Hanse fleets having ceased to call.

The high prices which ruled universally, and the particularly high price of wool due to the demand from Flanders and from home manufacturers were the chief causes of the great decrease of arable and increase of pasture farming in England, a process assisted by the suppression of the Monasteries and the dispersal of their lands in 1536. This agricultural revolution which was in progress up to 1600 had the effect

of driving many thousands of tenants and labourers off the land into the towns, where for a long time there was no demand for their services. In the meantime vagrancy grew to be a serious problem and the Poor Law became a permanent national institution.

Great trading companies to East and West were formed and out of the strife of the early buccaneers an English merchant fleet was built which eventually surpassed that of the Dutch, and was to be the foundation of England's future commercial and naval power.

The development of shipping and the demand for timber from Russia opened up communications with that country and materially hastened its internal political and economic growth.

New East coast towns like Boston and Hull grew up for the Baltic trade, while Bristol flourished on the trade across the Atlantic. England now became the centre of the Christian world, owing to her admirable position as a depot. There was a corresponding decline in the commercial monopoly previously exercised by Jews in the Eastern Mediterranean.

With the rise of her commerce and banking, Holland also carefully developed her agriculture, and her success in the use of root crops and grasses which for the first time made it possible to keep stock alive during the winter, was of great importance to England and other countries which later learned from her example.

For Europe as a whole the results were important and lasting. The need for big accumulations of capital to join in the new commercial enterprises, which were of an unprecedented size and expense, and the need for adequate protection against attack in distant waters, gave an urge towards national instead of city organisation. This was the economic basis of the new nations and Empires, Portugal, Spain, Holland and England.

The great increase in sea voyages, the new experiences and the new knowledge of navigation obtained from the Arabs gave an added importance to overseas trade and, as has been seen, destroyed the old Mediterranean and overland trade routes.

In its turn commercial activity created bigger markets and a steadier demand for raw materials and industrial products, which reacted immediately on the hitherto small

and unprogressive industries. Local isolation tended to be broken down as bigger areas were drawn into the sphere of commerce either as sources of supply or as consumers of Colonial and Eastern goods. The use of money became everywhere more general with its disintegrating effect on the old Manorial relationships, and banking began to be of new importance as a support of industry.

In short, the discoveries began the era of industrial and commercial activity which continued without essential change till the Industrial Revolution.

H.

## TRADE UNIONS—SICK BENEFIT CLUBS.

### CLYNE'S CONFESSION.

Mr. J. R. Clynes, speaking at Southport on Saturday in support of the benevolent fund established by the local branch of the National Union of General Municipal Workers, said he thought the trade union was the proper organisation through which the spirit of benevolence that was in most of them should work. Many people were under the impression that trade unions existed only for making mischief, that they were always trying to stir up discontent. There could be no greater delusion than that. If trade unions did not exist we would have a condition of mob law.

His answer to those who grumbled about the work of trade unions was that 6d. out of every 10d. subscribed to trade unions went back again to those who paid it in the form of benevolent benefits of innumerable kinds. Most of the money contributed to trade unions, amounting to £5,000,000 a year, was not spent on strikes or even in support of men in lockouts. It was not spent in fighting employers, but in sick benefit, in out-of-work pay, in supplementing the money workmen received as compensation during periods of injury. It was a pity the press did not give more attention to that side of trade union activity. If they did anything wrong it at once got into the papers; it had its news value. But they could live an absolutely perfect faultless life and would never be mentioned.—("Manchester Guardian," November 2, 1925.)



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All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

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**SOCIALISM AND THE HUMANITARIANS.**

Ever since the recent International Blood Carnival, the word "Humanity" has seemed to have acquired a slight sarcastic flavour. It has certainly been demonstrated that the so-called beasts have much to learn from humanity in the way of beastliness. And the curious part of the whole business was, that those whose particular role was supposed to have been the preaching of Humanity, Love, Brotherhood and the rest of it, were the first to drop it when the butchery started. Doubtless you will be wondering why we are dragging this old tale out again. Everybody knows that when the call came to take up the bayonet, very few of its students experienced any difficulty in dropping the Bible. We only refer to it again as a sort of a prologue to another study of human psychology.

Just before the great Christian festival at Christmas, the Animal Defence Society thought to improve the shining hour by inserting a seasonable advertisement in the newspapers. "Christmas is approaching," they said, "and the Spirit of Mercy is knocking at the heart of Everyman." And so the Animal Defence Society suggest that in answer to the knock, why not send them a nice donation towards building a beautiful new slaughterhouse. A lurid, and pos-

sibly true, picture is drawn of reeking carcasses, pools of blood, pole-axes and knives, pain-poisoned meat and other horrible details, calculated to draw the money from the pockets of revolted readers. To aid in this lofty work one is informed that donors of £1,000 will have their names inscribed upon a tablet as Founders; those of £500 as Builders; those of £250 as Masons; of £100 as Carpenters, and of £50 as Bricklayers. This, you will admit, is interesting. What a reflection for the proud Mason that he is considered worth five common Bricklayers or two and a half lordly Carpenters. It should provide some interesting dinner-hour discussions for the men who erect the building. It is rather a pity that few of them will have the forethought to provide themselves with a copy of the list of potential Masons, Carpenters, and Bricklayers, the advertisement mentioned. In these days of sex-equality it is cheerful to note that over two-thirds of them are women. But we digress. What is their precise grievance?

They object to the use of the pole-axe in killing large animals. They object to the use of the knife without preliminary stunning in killing pigs, calves and sheep. They object to the way animals are roped and dragged and driven to the point of slaughter. They object to animals being slaughtered in sight of each other and their standing awaiting their doom on floors covered with blood and amid the carcasses of those slain. In short, they object to all avoidable cruelty in the killing of the animals upon which mankind feeds. The Foundation Stone of this model slaughter-house was laid on Dec. 14th, when a prayer of dedication (whatever that may be) was offered that the building might serve as an example of pity and kindly treatment of animals.

Now what is wrong with all this? Surely we also are in sympathy with any movement to lessen the amount of suffering in the world! Surely we are not going to crab any attempt, however feeble, at abolishing avoidable cruelty! Perish the thought. Then where does our grumble come in? Just here. We do believe in first things first. We do insist upon a sense of proportion. We also have our objections. They relate primarily to human beings. Consider recent history. We objected to human beings being torn to pieces by shrapnel and

splintered steel. We objected to our boys being taught the proper way to insert a bayonet into the intestines of a fellow human being, and to so twist it as to make the most ghastly wound. We objected to fathers, brothers and sons being blinded, gassed, poisoned, blown to fragments, driven insane, butchered, or tortured by every horrible device that perverted ingenuity could evolve. We objected to women and children being starved, exploited, maddened and massacred in the sacred name of Patriotism. We were the Human Defence Society. Where were the members of the Animal Defence Society then? Were they weeping over pole-axed cows and distressed sheep, or were they taking part in the great work of disembowelling their fellow-creatures. We fear the latter. It needs little more than the list of Lords, Dukes, Earls and Admirals who figure in the list of contributors to convince us of that.

And what did we do? For the ten years of our existence before the War we denounced the conditions that made the catastrophe inevitable. During the progress of the Horror itself, we protested against it as a crime against humanity; that is we protested so far as the friends of the Animal Defence Society would ignore our efforts, as not being weighty enough to hinder their great Blood-feast. And now that that War is over, we are engaged in the work of pointing out the inevitability of another, and yet another war so long as capitalism lasts. We are not oblivious of the claims of animals to consideration, but we think the claims of mankind are greater. What of the horrors of mines, slums and factories; the degradation that follows unemployment; the disease inherent in foul conditions, malnutrition and neglect? We think these are primary things. We say further, that the horrors of both peace and war have their origin in the capitalist basis of society. Time and again we have proved it. We get remarkably few bouquets thrown to us, neither do we expect them. But when we see people who are making a handsome living out of the cruelties of capitalism, distributing thousand pound cheques to ease the lot of pigs and sheep—well, we are mildly surprised, that's all. They have a heart, we suppose, but the cry of suffering humanity has less effect, apparently, than the bleat of a sheep.

To be quite candid, we have little hope of their hearts at all. Should that sensitive organ ever be perturbed by the patent evils in the fabric of society, we may be sure there are learned economists among them who will provide a comfortable explanation. We have more hope of the working class itself. It is to them we address our message. We ask them to consider whether the present system of society gives them anything approaching what they expect of life. We suggest to them that the existing huge engines of wealth production are capable of providing ease and plenty for all, and that the reason they do not do so is because they are the private property of a few instead of the common possession of all. We therefore recommend them to seriously study our literature, gain a knowledge of how the present state of things has come about, and how it may be altered. Cruelty to animals will go the way of all forms of cruelty, when a real civilised existence becomes a possibility to everyone. So let us have first things first. If anyone has a thousand pound cheque they would like to devote to the abolition of cruelty to human beings, our address is on the back page.

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**COMPULSORY ARBITRATION.**

There has been some talk recently about compulsory arbitration in the settlement of industrial disputes. Let us examine what is behind the idea.

It should be remembered that the general practice employed in the past has been the so-called "fight to a finish" method: we refer to the "strike" or "lock-out," the armed forces being kept in readiness, as a government would say, "to maintain law and order": this, so far as the national life is concerned.

In the international arena of world politics, it is to be noticed that the governments of most of the large States are beginning to realise that there lurk grave dangers in the use of force in the settlement of their differences. Consequently the League of Nations made its modest bow to a war-weary world a few years ago. Behind the League of Nations is said to be the principle of "compulsory arbitration." It is the first feeble flicker in the minds of the more astute capitalists of the need for an alternative to "blood and iron."

Hot on the heels of the League of Nations comes the "Arbitrate First League," the formation of which was recently reported by the "Daily Herald."

Naturally enough J. Ramsay MacDonald, political tourist and odd-job man for the capitalist class, gives it his blessing. He hails it as the greatest discovery of the age—next to himself—and the "Red Letter."

This development in the international relationships of the ruling class has its reflection in the domestic life of the nation. We refer to the recent coal-mining dispute in this country. It will be remembered that a stoppage was averted at the eleventh hour by the intervention of the Government by the granting of a subsidy.

While, therefore, the degree of economic development of the foremost nations of the world permitted, up to within recent years, "a fight to a finish" as between employers and employed (the former generally being the victors and necessarily so by virtue of the political power enjoyed, and ironically enough, bestowed upon them by the workers), the growing interdependence of what are known as "key industries," raises objection to such methods to-day. Another important factor has also to be considered, i.e., competition for the world's markets. This is now so keen (owing to the entry of

the colonial dependencies, Canada, Australasia, India and again Japan, the most formidable rival in the East, to the age-long supremacy of the Western world) that time lost through "strikes" and "lock-outs" means loss or cancellation of orders and contracts.

Compulsory arbitration in consequence, therefore, may well become the new guiding star—for the ruling class—for the future safeguarding of their economic aspirations.

The sufferings endured in the past by the hungry strikers, the murder of their defenceless dependents, the horrors of infantile mortality, the wholesale butchery of countless millions, occasioned in the last great war, pale into insignificance compared with the one all-absorbing passion of the capitalists, i.e., to maintain their political supremacy and their position of affluence and idleness which this implies. For this all-important reason the workers are being called upon to forget the past, i.e., Germany's "war guilt." Therefore, Germany comes into the sacred circle of the League of Nations. The "horrible hun" we were called upon to hate and revile is now to be looked upon as a repentant sinner. The oscillations of world trade, influenced largely by the war, demand new undertakings and agreements between the capitalist highwaymen; or, to use the terminology of the professors, "maintain balance of power." The League of Nations represents the machinery which they hope will achieve this desirable end.

**THE WORKERS' VIEW-POINT.**

Although the majority of the States of the Western world depend upon a very wide and universal suffrage, nevertheless the freedom of any organised section of the workers to sell their services exists only in name. The workers may look forward with cold comfort, therefore, when they are informed by an all-wise and beneficent Arbitration Court, that as from such and such a date they will be permitted to suffer a reduction in their standard of living under the plea, perhaps, that the Empire's future welfare demands such a sacrifice.

It must be emphasised here that the workers get what they vote for, that is all. The simple economics of the wages system clearly reveal that the workers can only hope, at the best, to receive in wages what it costs to maintain them in a condition to

continue working and replace their type. Carrots and labour power are commodities; the price at which they are sold is determined by the same economic law, i.e., the cost of production, which, of course, fluctuates with the operation of supply and demand.

**CAPITALISTS ON THE DEFENSIVE.**

Compulsory arbitration, then, if and when it becomes the rule for regulating national and international differences, will simply stand revealed as the great gun of the ruling class.

"But why do we give the arbitrators political power?" asks one, a little less dull-witted than the rest.

The answer is, that the working class fail, as yet, to recognise that their interests, as a class, are diametrically opposed to those who govern or arbitrate for them. That in a class-divided society, Arbitration Courts will be influenced, ultimately, by the economic necessities of the ruling class.

The Socialist seeks to abolish class-divided society. To achieve this, the revolutionary object of the workers must be Socialism.

O. C. I.

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**TAXATION AND THE WORKERS.****A REPLY TO A CORRESPONDENT.**

An article under the above heading in our issue of June last has called forth a letter from Mr. A. Mortmain, of Sydney, N.S.W.

The gist of the article was that taxation, as a part of the machinery of government, exists only to provide means for maintaining the privileges of the property-owning class; that the workers' wages leave them no margin out of which to pay taxes and that consequently it is a matter of indifference to their interest how or what taxes are levied. As Socialists, we are concerned with Socialism and not with any scheme of taxation. Hence we oppose all other parties which endeavour to maintain in the workers' minds the illusion that taxes are a political issue for them.

Mr. Mortmain's contention is that while this is correct in the main "insufficient taxation . . . does prejudice labour" and concludes that "taxation alone is sufficient to socialise Great Britain."

Our correspondent appears to consider that the "rentier class" forms the chief burden upon the backs of the workers and suggests that we should concentrate upon "the abolition of the socialised debt, the pooling of rent," and State loans "at a low rate of interest." It is evident from these suggestions that he does not look upon the matter from the standpoint of the wage-slave but of the small proprietor and his "Socialism" is not a system based upon common ownership and democratic control of the means of life but a petty bourgeois Utopia in which, as he puts it, "the individuals are each in pawn to society as a whole."

In any well-developed capitalist country interest is only one of the means by which certain capitalists appropriate part of the surplus produced by the labour of the workers. Mr. Mortmain ignores the exploitation which proceeds in the factory and makes no effort to show how the workers therein would benefit from his proposals, even if they were sufficiently practicable to get adopted by any political party with a chance of success. On this last point he appears doubtful himself for he says, "the Labour party are not likely to suggest this except vaguely in the form of a capital levy." May we point out that



where, as in France, the "rentier class" is possessed of relatively great power and the small proprietors exist in considerable numbers, it is the latter rather than the former who will be hit by a capital levy.

When the working-class have become conscious of their position as disinherited slaves and have determined to end capitalism and substitute Socialism—when they have organised as a class and become politically supreme, they are hardly likely to waste their time in piecemeal measures of the nature suggested by our correspondent. Instead of indulging in financial tricks in order to enable their wages to "buy back the whole of the wealth" they produce, they will organise a system of production and distribution in which wages and interest, along with the whole financial camouflage, will find no place. They will cease to produce commodities and will commence to produce use-values only. Money therefore will cease to have any function to perform and the problems connected with money will cease to trouble them.

E.B.

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FROM THE

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**HENRY DUBB—AND  
HIS BROTHER.**

Readers of the "Labour" Press are familiar with that vacant-faced individual who is supposed to typify the Tory variety of working-class ignorance. Henry's weaknesses—his fondness for a drop of beer and a bob on a horse and a certain disinclination to think for himself have all been dwelt upon ad nauseam.

The weaknesses of his brother, Jimmy, are less often dealt with. Henry is, in the main, of a cheerful disposition; in fact his "good natured" tolerance lies at the root of much of his readiness to accept things as they are. Jimmy, on the other hand, is a taciturn, unsociable cuss whose chief object in life appears to be the airing of his "superiority" to Henry and his pals and the meddling with their habits. He is possessed with an all-absorbing itch to put them "right" in matters of faith and morals. Politically he is by tradition a Liberal, though of recent years he has taken to calling himself a "Labour" man, and even professes a leaning towards Socialism. So far, however, his *leaning* has done nothing to support its case and a good deal to lessen Henry's disposition to consider it as a remedy for the evils of which he is dimly conscious.

Henry, in spite of his obvious slowness, is not altogether dense. He has, for instance, a somewhat cynical disbelief in Jimmy's "idealism," so glibly vaunted.

He distrusts his own class on the ground that a boss who has risen from the bottom makes a harder taskmaster than one who is born in that position. Hence he views with disfavour all the "rangers" and "wind-bags" whom he shrewdly suspects of an ambition to exploit his support.

Jimmy, on the other hand, betrays an almost imbecile tendency to place absolute confidence in each and every would-be political climber, every man or woman with the gift of the gab and a professed desire to "help" the workers. He is a fanatical believer in the "intelligent minority," and has little use for the "drink-sodden" democracy except as voting cattle for his favourites.

Another point, rather in Henry's favour than against him, is his lack of enthusiasm for Jimmy's pet obsession—increased State control. Whether it relates to the "pubs" or the mines, railways, etc.,

Henry can see nothing in this proposal but a greater extension of official dominance, of the petty vexations, tyranny, inextricably associated with the modern bureaucracy. Needless to say, Jimmy's feeble plea that the State is the *people*, leaves him cold. He *knows* otherwise, from everyday experience. This, again, strengthens his conservatism. The fact that all "progressive" proposals appear to involve State action induces in him a stubborn distrust of all progress.

The Socialist, taking a scientific view of social change, can regard the wordy struggles between Henry and his brother with some amusement, tinged at times with impatience at the blindness of both sides; but he further sees the relentless economic development which cuts the ground from under the feet of both. Increased State control, for instance, of industrial and social affairs, is the outcome, not of some Utopian theory, but of the increase in the size and social character of the productive forces, and the intensified antagonism which that increase begets in social relations. State regulation is the only means possessed by capitalism to preserve itself, the only means by which it can control the internal conflicts within the capitalist class on the one hand, and the greater conflict with the workers on the other. In other words, Nationalisation, etc., will proceed in accordance with capitalist requirements irrespective alike of the opposition of Henry and the support of Jimmy.

The extent of this development may be debatable, but one thing is certain. To whatever extent it proceeds it will not solve the social problem; it will not rid society of the struggle between the workers and their exploiters. Wherever State ownership exists there exists also the necessity for Trade Union effort to maintain wages and conditions at subsistence level. The State represents, everywhere, the interests of the exploiting class against the workers. Neither Henry nor Jimmy realise this. Each of them in turn put in power one section or another of the numerous political flunkies of that class. They do not see behind the labels of these sections or parties—Liberal, Labour or Tory, all alike, recognise and uphold the legal right of the owning class to their property, no matter with what fine phrases they may disguise their intentions.

All alike accept the exploitation of the workers and are prepared to use the forces

of the State to maintain the system based thereon. This is their main function; their pet schemes are merely incidental efforts to further especially the interests of the particular section of the capitalist class on whose support they rely.

What, then, is there to choose between the Dubbs, Henry and Jimmy? Each allows himself to be duped in the interest of some section or other of the master class. Neither gains anything as a result of his political activities. As workers, they have as little to hope for in "reforming" capitalism as in "conserving" it. Its existence in any shape or form means misery and subjection for the workers. For the one, therefore, to deride the other, is merely an example of the pot calling the kettle black. The Socialist Party invites both of them to drop their mutual distrust and abuse and to *study* Socialism, confident that understanding will breed conviction.

E.B.

**SIGNS OF THE TIMES.**

While the Capitalists control political power the Workers will receive the quantity and quality of education that it suits their Masters for their own purposes to give them. To them the Workers' Children are no more than potential wealth-producing units and in educating them their sole consideration is "Does it Pay?" Sir Austen Chamberlain truly speaks his Masters' voice when he says we must have more "if our commerce and our education are to hold their own against a host of active rivals" ("Daily Chronicle," 19-12-25), and that in brief is the reason for our "education." Modern methods of wealth production have made a higher education necessary in all directions, and as is usual among the lower grades of workers, a supply much in excess of any demand now affects the once better educated and privileged workers in their efforts to obtain a livelihood. The parent of a University graduate writes complaining to the "Times Educational Supplement" (12-11-25) as follows: "Boys and girls who are kept at secondary schools until they are 16 or 18 years of age find on leaving that there is no vacant job of the nature for which they have been trained and either they are compelled to undertake work which they could have done equally well—possibly better—without secondary



and University education or join the army of the unemployed." So much for the security in life of the educated. Neither does that other very respectable section of the Working Class known as the Professional, escape the vicissitudes of a Worker's life to-day. Writing of Architects in the "Journal of Careers" (Dec.) this magazine says: "At least as many men are entering the profession as the profession can at the present time absorb," and of women who qualify it states further that "they are not meeting a dearth or supplying a long felt want." Further comment says: "There are more pharmacists seeking situations than there are situations available; more students are entering pharmacy each year than ever before and it is not easy to visualise how these students will be absorbed." It is the same story in other professions, Actors, Doctors, Journalists, etc., all struggling to live. Despite the snobbery and conceit of such people the development of Capitalism will disillusion them and compel them to realise their common servitude with the rest of the Working Class. The Capitalists have not educated the Workers' children from philanthropic motives, but such education will enable them to interest themselves in our propaganda in growing numbers as they reach the Working age. To extend the intelligence displayed and exercised in the production of wealth to that which will see the need for social change, requires the patient and persistent application of Socialist teachings. The growing difficulty of our Masters and their agents to prove the Capitalist system a beneficent one for the Workers enables us to be assured with no false optimism that time and truth are on our side.

MAC.

### KNOWLEDGE.

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### WHAT "LABOUR" IS DOING.

"Advanced" people urge the workers to support the different Labour Parties on the plea that they represent the progressive element in society, and are hastening us onward to the much-desired solution of all our troubles. Times out of number we have shown that the Labour Parties act in reality as obstacles, hindering the enlightenment of the worker and do little more than aid the capitalists in their more delicate schemes.

Among the minor problems that occupy a principal place in Labour programmes is that of small nationalities.

When nothing can be done, prominent Labour leaders wax eloquent over the depressed position of subject nations, but when their opportunity comes, they do exactly the same as the governments they condemn. We witnessed this in the handling of Egypt and India by the English Labour Party during their brief period of office.

The "New Leader" (15. 1. 26.) sheds further light on this subject in a reference it makes to the treatment of Indians on the eastern coast of South Africa, as the following quotation will show:—

"Race antagonism, here as elsewhere, is pressed into the service of economic jealousy. There is a voluntary repatriation scheme for Indians now in force, but it is found that those who take advantage of it are labourers, whom the planters are sorry to lose since they are more docile and efficient than Zulus. Indian traders, on the other hand, do not willingly seek repatriation, and they compete all too successfully with the Whites. It is the acknowledged intention of the Union Government that these new harrying measures should drive them out of the land, and for this South African Labour—to its shame—is jointly responsible. Yet Indian immigration to South Africa was stopped on the understanding that Indians already domiciled there should be justly treated." (*Italics ours.*)

And these are the kind of people we are expected to support and assist into the seat of power at election time!

GILMAC.

### MARX ON FREE TRADE.

(Continued from previous issues).

Mr. Bowring's speech is the more remarkable because the facts quoted by him are correct, and the phrases with which he seeks to palliate them are characterised by the hypocrisy common to all Free Trade discourses. He represents the workers as means of production which must be superseded by less expensive means of production, pretends to see in the labour of which he speaks a wholly exceptional kind of labour, and in the machine which has crushed out the weavers an equally exceptional kind of machine. He forgets that there is no kind of manual labour which may not any day share the fate of the handloom weavers.

"The constant aim and tendency of every improvement of mechanism is indeed to do entirely without the labour of men, or to reduce its price, by superseding the labour of the adult males by that of women and children, or the work of the skilled by that of the unskilled workman. In most of the throstle mills spinning is now entirely done by girls of sixteen years and less. The introduction of the self-acting mule has caused the discharge of most of the (adult male) spinners, while the children and young persons have been kept on."

The above words of the most enthusiastic of Free Traders, Dr. Ure, are calculated to complete the confessions of Dr. Bowring. Mr. Bowring speaks of certain individual evils, and, at the same time, says that these individual evils destroy whole classes; he speaks of the temporary sufferings during a transition period, and does not deny that these temporary evils have implied for the majority the transition from life to death, and for the rest a transition from a better to a worse condition. When he asserts, farther on, that the sufferings of the working class are inseparable from the progress of industry, and are necessary to the prosperity of the nation, he simply says that the prosperity of the bourgeois class involves, as a necessary condition, the suffering of the labouring class.

All the comfort which Mr. Bowring offers the workers who perish, and, indeed, the whole doctrine of compensation which the Free Traders propound, amounts to this,—

You thousands of workers who are perishing, do not despair! You can die with an easy conscience. Your class will not perish. It will always be numerous enough for the capitalist class to decimate it without fear of annihilating it. Besides, how could capital be usefully applied if it did not take

care to keep up its exploitable material, i.e., the working men, to be exploited over and over again?

But, then, why propound as a problem still to be solved the question: What influence will the adoption of Free Trade have upon the condition of the working class? All the laws formulated by the political economists from Quesnay to Ricardo, have been based upon the hypothesis that the trammels which still interfere with commercial freedom have disappeared. These laws are confirmed in proportion as Free Trade is adopted. The first of these laws is that competition reduces the price of every commodity to the minimum cost of production. Thus the minimum of wages is the natural price of labour. And what is the minimum of wages? Just so much as is required for production of the articles absolutely necessary for the maintenance of the worker, and for the continued existence more or less poorly of his class.

But do not imagine that the worker receives *only* this minimum wage, and still less that he *always* receives it. No, according to this law, the working class will sometimes be more fortunate, will sometimes receive something above the minimum, but this surplus will merely make up for the deficit which they will have received below the minimum in times of industrial depression. That is to say, that within a given time which recurs periodically in the cycle which commerce and industry describe while passing through the successive phases of prosperity, over-production, stagnation, and crisis, when reckoning all that the working class has had above and below mere necessities, we shall see that, after all, they have received neither more nor less than the minimum, i.e., the working class will have maintained itself as a class after enduring any amount of misery and misfortune, and after leaving many corpses upon the industrial battle-field:

(To be continued.)

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**TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 17, Antil-road, Broad Lane, Tottenham, N.17. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce-grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to S. E. Williams, 85, Park-road, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at 162, High Street, Watford.

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**WOOD GREEN.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## THE PARIS COMMUNE.

The Socialist attaches no mystical importance to dates. Hence he is not given overmuch to the celebration of anniversaries. There is one event, however, in the annals of the class-struggle which needs to be kept in mind for the lessons to be learnt therefrom.

In March, 1871, after enduring the vile horrors of a prolonged siege, the working class of Paris rose against their oppressors and proceeded to administer the affairs of the city. Their victory was short-lived. Before the end of May the Government troops, assisted by their late "enemies," the Germans, overthrew the Commune and carried on for several days the wholesale massacre of its supporters.

Space does not permit here a detailed account of this historic episode, but one or two salient features may usefully be dwelt upon. The curious reader may consult Lissagaray's "History of the Commune," and Marx's "Civil War in France" for fuller light.

During the siege the ruling class of France had been compelled to protect their property by permitting the workers of the city to arm. As usual, they exploited the patriotic illusions and economic ignorance of their slaves. The workers *paid* for their arms themselves.

After the armistice the authorities, naturally apprehensive as to what an armed and discontented working class might attempt, endeavoured to disarm them. The workers resisted, for the time being successfully, and the Government fled in panic to Versailles.

Left in charge of the city, the workers administered affairs with remarkable success considering all the circumstances. They established universal suffrage and rid the city *pro tem* of the incubus of the

bureaucracy. The Commune was itself an administrative body and not a mere talking-shop. The practical results of its administration, such as the abolition of night work for bakers, were not, indeed, revolutionary, but so far as they went, were in the interests of the working class. The outlook of the Commune was towards the limitation of exploitation, rather than its abolition.

Improvised in an emergency, the Commune reflected both the political immaturity of its supporters and the incomplete economic development of France as a whole. On questions of major importance such as the property question and its own relationship to the Versailles Government, confusion reigned in the Commune, and vacillation, as a consequence, paralysed its hands. It left in the hands of its enemies the principal financial weapon, the Bank of France, and allowed these same enemies time to prepare their ruthless counter-stroke, while ostensibly negotiating "peace."

Behind much of the apparent weakness of the Commune, however, lay the isolation of Paris, the lack of working class organisation throughout the country. The peasantry and the petit bourgeoisie in general proved broken reeds on which to lean for support. Hence it was only a matter of time before the Commune fell, betrayed from within and overwhelmed from without. Neither the conditions of its existence nor its own mentality made it ripe for success.

For all that it failed, the Commune, nevertheless, constitutes an encouraging example of the ability of the workers to help themselves. It had all the faults of a purely spontaneous and instinctive upheaval, but it proved the existence of the capacity for self-assertion which is indis-



pensable to a revolutionary class. When the cynical bourgeois, secure behind the guns, or the spineless slave ignorant of how to capture them, tell us that the workers will never rise, we can point to the Commune and conclude that a class capable of such an effort will rise again. The rising we have in mind, however, is a determined, intelligently organised capture of political power by a working-class which has at last realised the underlying causes of its own movement and which will therefore know how to act when it has the power.

Hence we of the Socialist Party do not rest content with merely sentimentalising over the martyred dead, by the wall of Pere La Chaise. We incessantly insist on the necessity for our policy of no compromise with capitalism and the parties which uphold it. Class sentiment is a necessary element of class consciousness, but it is not sufficient in itself. Knowledge of the system we desire to overthrow and of the manner in which it is upheld are equally necessary. "Solidarity"! Yes! but the condition which necessitates solidarity on the part of the working class is *the class war*!

The utter ruthlessness of the revenge of the French bourgeoisie upon the Communards forms a never-to-be-forgotten warning of the criminal folly of parleying with the enemy. There can be no peace between exploiters and exploited save at the expense of the latter. When the workers realise this they will also realise the futility and danger, from their point of view, of Liberal "Labour" Parties and caricature "Communists" who rally to their support at the polls. They will realise, in fact, the necessity for the Socialist Party.

E.B.

## A MEETING

to commemorate

## The Commune of Paris

Will be held at

Stratford Town Hall,

On SUNDAY, MARCH 14th at 7.30 p.m.

A Number of Speakers.

Doors open at 7 p.m.

Admission Free.

## THE ANTICS OF THE LEFT-WING.

Without even having read the book one cannot help smiling at the diverting title chosen by the novelist who wrote "The Man with Two Left Feet." How can a man have two left feet? If they both point to the left, as left feet should, the man must walk forever in a narrow circle, arriving nowhere in particular. If the feet are not side by side but in line, how does he manage to preserve his balance? Probably the novelist credits nature with this deformity, but if such things happened one might well imagine it to be an instance of nature imitating art—the art of politics.

Can a man have two left feet? Can a "united" party have one right, a centre or so, two and possibly three left-wings? It can.

Can such a party march forever in a circle, arriving nowhere? It does. Can a party be achieving "progress" continually for a generation and yet leave the beneficiaries of that "progress"—the workers—worse off at the end than at the beginning? If you doubt it, look at the Labour Party. Can a man balance on two left feet? Can one oppose Weir Houses and not vote against them, and support Weir Houses without voting for them? Watch the statesmanlike MacDonald and the Jesuitical Wheatley. Can Mr. Thomas and Mr. Cook engage heatedly in public conflict and remain loyal to the same programme, the same policy and the same methods? The "Daily Herald" says that they can.

Mr. MacDonald has reached the pinnacle of success, but there are many who are ready to pull him down if he stumbles, and fight like wolves for his place and power. Every political student knows that there is no surer method of forcing one's way to the front rank than by stagemanaging well-timed rank and file "revolts"—hence the present flood of left wings.

### MR. WHEATLEY.

MacDonald was in his own tortuous way something of a genius, but for sheer subtlety we think he has met his match in Mr. Wheatley. Wheatley is on one of the left wings, but not so far to the left as to have to refuse office in the Labour Government. He is himself a Capitalist of some degree of wealth, advocates the abolition of Capitalism when speaking on the Clyde, believes a Labour administration prolongs

the life of Capitalism, introduced as Labour Minister of Health a Housing Bill which he himself described as "Capitalist"—"an attempt to patch up Capitalism," says the Labour Party is not Socialist and also that the Labour Party's support of religion proves that Socialism supports religion. But perhaps his finest piece of work was shown in his attitude to "direct action." He proclaims his belief in the necessity of urging soldiers to disobey orders should they be used against strikes. He attached his signature to a letter protesting against the Communist Trial Verdict. It read as follows:—

"It was stated on behalf of the Crown that it is seditious—(1) to preach the Class war; and (2) to appeal to soldiers, in case of industrial troubles, not to shoot their fellow-workers. There is a special danger to Labour in this assumption that these doctrines are illegal. The great mass of the Labour Movement believes in them, and expresses—and will continue to express—its belief."—(*Daily Herald*, 30th November, 1925.)

This, you may say, is perhaps rash, but surely the spirit is commendable? But just consider with me for one moment. When troops are so used they are under Martial Law, liable to the death penalty for disobedience; and when in 1924 an amendment was introduced in the House of Commons to abolish the death penalty, Mr. Wheatley voted against it. (Hansard 3 April, 1924, Army (Annual) Bill).

Is this not a mark of genius? Mr. Wheatley is a Catholic and a worthy descendant of the sixteenth century Jesuits who proved that Catholic subjects might legitimately assassinate Protestant rulers. But they added a rigid proviso that on no account may one put poison in a man's food or drink, for this, they said, would make him a suicide—which would be most improper. In a coarse age like ours it is at first sight by no means easy to appreciate the refinement of scruple, the delicate thoughtfulness of these Jesuit Philosophers. But, rightly looked at, what comfort it must have brought to the souls of murdered princes that they were despatched to their Maker *not* by poison in their beer, but by a poisoned dagger in the back. Wheatley, explaining his point of view to soldiers sentenced under an Act he voted for, because they took advice he gave, is surely entitled to a place beside his Jesuit forefathers.

### A "BETTER SPIRIT."

Mr. Cook is another left wing hero—an evangelist unaccountably strayed into the

Labour Movement. He has the usual Capitalist outlook on work and wages. He asks for instance ("Daily Herald," 9 March, 1925) "was it not a mistake that a miner was working for a less wage than that paid to a scavenger?" Why this slighting reference to scavengers? Why is it not a mistake, may we ask, for a miner to get less than a miner's official, or less than the Editor of the Herald? Is this how Mr. Cook proposes to unite the working class?

Mr. Cook, in company with Lansbury, Purcell, Ellen Wilkinson, Coppock, Tillett, and other left wing "stars," put his signature to a recent manifesto of the Industrial Christian Fellowship, which manifesto contains useful information about their queer beliefs.

It begins, "We stand for Christ and His Principles, independent of Party," which is surely a promising basis for a left wing. "It is our conviction that statesmanship will fail, and political programmes will prove futile as a solvent of social troubles, unless they embody the spirit and practice of Christ. . . . We are moved . . . in a sober and serious spirit, to make this appeal to our fellow-citizens of all classes, without regard to their political affiliations . . ."

This, you may observe, is not quite in the strain these people use at left wing gatherings. But then, of course, some of them are in the habit of being moved, if rumour speaks truly, not by a "sober, serious spirit," but by some other.

It does seem that those who call Cook "Emperor Cook" are hardly fair. Surely in his more exalted moments it is Jesus Christ he thinks he is?

### WHY NOT TWO LEFT WINGS? OR THREE? OR FOUR?

As we pointed out above, there is more than one left wing. The man has not only two left feet, but the two left feet want to walk in different directions. One, engineered by the "Sunday Worker," called it's little meeting of selected persons, only to find that "Lansbury's Weekly" had called another little meeting of selected persons. Then they fought over the right to be the original and only left wing. One bone of contention was the Communist Party. Should they be admitted or not? In the meantime the Communists claim that they are themselves the real genuine



article, but their position, it must be confessed, as a potential third left foot, is somewhat obscure. The parent body quite rudely cut them off and they are really the foot of another man altogether—a man living in Moscow. Does an amputated foot which insists on hanging around, really belong to its former body or not? That is the question of the moment. The I.L.P. claims to be a self-contained left wing itself, but Mr. Brailsford has given his Editorial benediction to one of the other left wings—which one we forget at the moment.

To be quite candid, we find this business of left wings a trifle confusing. What is going to be the outcome of this mess of intrigue? Suppose we grant, for the sake of argument, that the prime movers in these backstairs "palace revolutions" have only one motive—the welfare of the workers. Are they likely to achieve something beneficial by such means? Does experience show that anything worth while ever came out of such plotting and lying and wire-pulling? Is it not obvious that the only gainers will be the Wheatleys and Cooks and their imitators, and that the climbers who get left below will simply perpetuate the disgusting tradition in endless years of silly "tactical" marching and counter-marching, groupings and dissolutions, amalgamations and secessions? They agree only on the unworthiness of the Labour Party. Yet, ironically enough, we who alone maintain an attitude of open hostility to that unworthy party, and who consistently fight for Socialism and nothing else, are told by these very people that we confuse the minds of the workers!

H.

## THE 22nd ANNUAL PARTY CONFERENCE

will be held on

Friday &amp; Saturday, Apr. 2nd. &amp; 3rd.

FAIRFAX HALL,

STANHOPE GARDENS, HARRINGAY, N.

Commence at 10 a.m.

Open to All.

THE ANNUAL PARTY RE-UNION will take place in the above hall on Good Friday, April 2nd, at 7.30 p.m. Doors open 7 p.m. Tickets from any Branch Secretary.

## SOCIALISM AND PARLIAMENTARY ACTION.

The following letter from a correspondent in Glasgow is printed in full and our reply follows:—

To S.P.G.B.

Comrades,

The S.P.G.B. holds that supreme power in present day society is political, and is centred in Parliament, owing to the fact that Parliament controls the armed forces. As proof of this, it is stated that Parliament votes the necessary money for maintaining the armed forces, from year to year. The S.P.G.B. say that to get control of the armed forces is to get control of political power; and *logically* deduce from this that when a class-conscious majority of the electorate sends Socialists to Parliament they will control the armed forces. That, from that day forward, "everything in the garden will be lovely," and that Capitalism will die a sudden death.

But I am afraid that there are one or two things the S.P.G.B. has forgotten, such as, that Parliament only controls the armed forces when the Capitalist class have a majority there; that, as a Socialist majority will not take away their (the Capitalists') money, the latter will still be able to pay (and handsomely at that) for the maintenance of the armed forces. This, the more easily, since the officers are all members of the Capitalist class. For proof of this it has only to be stated that it takes more than the pay or salary of an officer to maintain his position, as such. As everybody knows, most of the wartime "officers" are to-day on the bureau, or begging on the streets. That the Capitalist class are preparing for "the day" is surely obvious to anyone who "has eyes to see," when organisations such as the Secret Service, O.M.S., Fascisti, etc., are already in existence and for a purpose which they do not seek to hide.

Also we should not lose sight of the fact that "specials" and other auxiliary forces (Black and Tans) were organised at short notice when occasion demanded, in the past.

The *Logic* of this is that Capitalism will be abolished like all past systems of society, *not* through the method of capturing Parliament, but at the barricades. Further does the S.P.G.B. deny that Finance Capital

tal, through the medium of the cabinet, dictates the policy of Parliament?

Hoping that this communication is published in full when answered.

Yours for Revolution,

ANTI-PARLEY.

## OUR REPLY.

The above letter contains the usual anarchist objections to political action which have been answered continually in the "Socialist Standard."

In the first place, we must correct some crude mis-statements of our critic. We do not say that "everything in the garden will be lovely" when a class-conscious working class controls Parliament. The capture of the political machinery is, as Marx says in the Communist manifesto, the *first* step which must be taken to obtain emancipation. The succeeding conditions may be quite unlovely, depending upon the circumstances of the time and the degree of counter-revolution attempted.

The statement that Parliament only controls the armed forces whilst Capitalists are in the majority in Parliament is pure bunkum. Parliament is a machine which arose and evolved long before Capitalism. The tremendous outlay of finance and effort on the part of Capitalists to assure that the workers vote for Capitalist candidates and their lackeys shows how important control of Parliament is. Then we are told that Socialist control of Parliament will allow Capitalists to have the money to pay for the upkeep of the armed forces for their own use.

The actual fact is that the armed forces are maintained out of funds voted by Parliament. These huge sums are obtained from taxation paid by the employers out of the surplus extracted from the result of the workers' labour. This exploitation will stop when the workers control political power and hence the funds out of which Capitalists can pay armies will cease.

The Capitalist system could not be run by bodies of employers hiring some armed bands to attack the whole working class. Capitalism depends upon the regular and smooth conduct of affairs under which the wheels of industry can turn, commerce be carried on and profits be obtained. Therefore a constitution with delegated functions and a Parliament controlling nationally the forces of repression is an essential thing

to the life of Capitalism in all "advanced" countries.

Therefore, the resolute efforts of all those aiming at conquest of the social powers to control the political machine.

Mussolini in Italy or Lenin in Russia, or the worldwide struggles of rising Capitalists—each had to first of all conquer political power as represented in the political machinery of each country.

Our policy is framed for the country in which we live, and according to existing conditions.

Parliament being the central machine of the present constitution, we are compelled to control it in our own interests as a working class.

Should the Capitalists destroy the constitution, the situation would be changed and the detail policy of the workers would be different. But this assumption of destruction of Parliamentary institutions reckons without the facts of economic life. In destroying the constitution the Capitalists would cripple their system. Capitalism in advanced countries depends upon government by elected authority, local and national and the disruption of these bodies would result in chaos, not in a system. The incitement to open warfare resulting from the abolition of Parliament would prevent that ordered working of affairs upon which Capitalism depends.

After denying the power of Parliament, our critic admits its importance and its power by pointing out that finance capital dictates the policy of Parliament.

It is obvious, then, even to our confused critic, that not merely content with having the finance, the financiers find it essential to influence the policy of Parliament. That they can do so is due to the fact that it is in the interest of their fellow Capitalists in Parliament to carry out the wishes of the bankers, etc. A Socialist working class intent upon abolishing Capitalism would have a policy directly in conflict with the interests of Capitalists—financial or industrial, and the day of Parliament carrying out the wishes of the Capitalists would be over.

While "Anti-Parley" states that the army is officered by the Capitalists, he also tells us that there is a large number of officers on the dole. Does that show that officers belong to the Capitalist class? Actually it shows that when Parliament votes no funds for them they are sacked—then



they are on the dole. Officers in the main are not Capitalists. The Capitalists being few, are compelled to hire the workers to run the system, and also the civil and military forces to control it. Further, officers are helpless without an army and the army acts not according to its officers but according to instructions which are given by those in charge of political power.

If the officers do not carry out these instructions they are liable to severe punishment apart from losing their position. Our critic's reference to the large number of officers on the dole shows how rapidly they can be trained and how many are available. If our critic studied history, recent history, he would know that officers, to maintain themselves, are compelled to transfer their allegiance to those who control political power and who can give them jobs. Look at the huge number of German officers who took well paid jobs to organise the famous Red Army of Russia. Look at the helpless state of the Czarist officers in March, 1917, when the rank and file revolted.

We are next told that the capitalists are preparing for "the day" by forming the O.M.S., Fascists, etc. These bodies depend for success upon recruiting the workers to their ranks and while they can obtain a large measure of working class support it shows the need for Socialist propaganda, for until the mass of the workers understand their class interests, they cannot be expected to act in the interests of their class.

The dangerous and misleading alternative to Parliamentary action offered by our critic is—the barricades. What, then, becomes of his argument about the officers of the Capitalist class being in command of the Army? How can unarmed workers fight the army?

In these days of powerful instruments of death dealing and after the experiences of the World War—we are told by our anarchist opponent to throw up some barricades! The lessons of the Paris Commune, of the Rand, of Munich, of Hungary, etc., are all lost on our "anti-parley" friend. Read Engel's introduction to Marx's "Class Struggles in France (1895) on the insanity of barricades in face of modern developments!

Apparently our critic has been listening to the anarchist element denouncing Parliament and as neither the anarchists nor

others can tell him any alternative to Parliamentary action, he falls back upon the policy that reactionaries everywhere have tried to get the workers to adopt so that they can drown them in blood.

Barricade or bombs, chemical parcel post or street fights—our opponents advocate everything except the one policy—Socialist knowledge, Socialist organisation and Socialist political action by the mass of the working class.

As seen in our opponents' alternative, the enemies of political action become dangerous to the working class. ED. COM

### TWO PAMPHLETS.

Mr. R. Neft sends us two pamphlets, "The Wage Trick," one penny, and "Doctor and Dustman," twopence, both obtainable from the author at Stepney Street, Llanelly.

We have criticised earlier pamphlets by Mr. Neft and these are decidedly better. The first does succeed in explaining perfectly, plainly and simply how the worker is robbed. It is only marred by confusion about the nature of capital and the incorrect assumption that money will continue to function under Socialism. Mr. Neft also knows quite well that the Labour Party does not propose to deprive the Capitalists of their property rights, and that the 5,000,000 who voted Labour were not voting for Socialism.

When Mr. Neft invites us to get inside that party he offers no advantage which can compensate for the necessity of having to lie to the workers as he is compelled to do in order to remain a Labour candidate.

"Doctor and Dustman" is a really interesting series of arguments in story form against Capitalist inequality of income. It curiously misses the point which is more fundamental than mere inequality, that is that Capitalist income is unearned. Mr. Neft might with advantage ponder Liebnicht's remark that "enthusiasm for equality is not Socialism."

The class war is the only sound basis for Socialist theory and Socialist organisation. H.

### STOCKPORT.

Those interested in forming a branch of the Party in Stockport are invited to communicate with THE GENERAL SECRETARY, 17, MOUNT PLEASANT, LONDON, W.C.1.

## SOCIALISM AND RELIGION.

"Forward" looks Backward!

'Tis said that truth, like murder, will out; likewise, that when rogues fall out honest men come by their own. These old saws are called to mind by signs that the existence of the S.P.G.B. cannot be ignored indefinitely by its opponents. In their vote-catching contests these opponents see the party of revolution, watching and waiting, rigid and relentless, ready for the time when the workers shall tire of sham fights, and the game of the professional politicians is up for good.

The rise of the Labour Party, that vague, flimsy shadow of the substantial event that is to come, has provided frankly reactionary groups and individuals with the opportunity to indulge in attempts to raise the hair of the average elector by such means as the cry that "Socialism is Atheism!" The fact that the Labour Party does not stand for Socialism in the scientific sense of the term and consequently does not deserve to be reproached with materialism is, of course, ignored. The object is not merely to score points off the Labour Party, but to confuse the minds of the workers. If they can be persuaded that the Labour Party is Socialist, then the inevitable failure of that Party to justify the support it receives will be proclaimed far and wide as the "failure of Socialism." In its turn the Labour Party tells the workers that its "Socialism" has nothing to do with materialism and scornfully disowns any connection with the S.P.G.B.—fortunately for us!

An instance of this sort of thing is to hand in "Forward" (Jan. 16th). A certain Hon. Alan Boyle, in an effort to discredit the candidature of a "Labour" parson, quotes the "Catholic Herald," which in turn quotes our pamphlet (No. 6) "Socialism and Religion." Instead of facing the challenge from the Socialist point of view "Forward" sneers at us as an "insignificant organisation" with probably half-a-dozen members and professes to have had to drag in John S. Clarke "an antiquarian authority" (and, let us add, ex-member of another "insignificant organisation," the S.L.P.), in order to discover the facts about our existence.

This would be a poor world without a sense of humour and we do not begrudge "Forward" and its like their little jokes.

They have so little else to offer the workers. What "Forward" apparently overlooks is that by falling for the Tory bait it is helping to advertise its most determined enemies. There are three methods by which truth may be held back—persecution, ridicule and silence; and the most powerful of these is silence. Silence, both in the Capitalist press and the Labour rags alike, has helped to keep down the numbers of the S.P.G.B., but in their endeavour to settle accounts with one another our opponents are breaking the silence which has for so long been their only reply to our attack.

E.B.

### NEW PUBLICATIONS FUND.

Contributions to this fund are earnestly invited to assist us with the expense of publishing more literature.

Below we give donations to date.

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F. A., A503/20/2/26.

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All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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**The Socialist Standard,**

MARCH,



1926

**THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND I.L.P. UNITY.**

The alleged revolutionary nature of the Communist Party can be seen by the article of the Acting Secretary of the C.P. (Robert Stewart) in the *Sunday Worker* for January 17. He refers to the "recent offer (which is still open) to co-operate with the I.L.P. in a campaign on such points as 100 per cent. trades unionism, a living wage, and nationalisation of mines." If these two parties can find common ground in such work, which leaves capitalism safe and sound, there is no reason why they should not unite. We suggest they should call the United Party—the Political Patchers Alliance. One of the final pleas of Mr. Stewart is pathetic.

He says: "Surely, if Mr. Brockway finds it possible to co-operate with (say, Mr. R. McDonald, Mr. J. H. Thomas, or Mr. Will Thorne from each of which he differs widely in matters of theory, his co-operation with the Communists should be equally possible."

Certainly! Why not!

**THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND VIOLENCE.**

"Neither the Communists, nor any other section of the working-class movement, desire or advocate violence or civil war in

any form." Thus writes Palme Dutt, of the Communist Executive, in the *Labour Monthly* for Dec., 1925. Reading this and some of the speeches in the C.P. trial one would imagine the Communist Party were sworn enemies of insurrection and armed uprising. But the theses of the 3rd International on the "The Role of the C.P. in the Communist International" lays down a very different policy. Thus: "The working class cannot achieve victory over the bourgeoisie by means of the general strike alone and by the policy of folded arms. The proletariat must resort to an armed uprising." The Statutes of the 3rd International are very clear upon this point. They state: "The aim of the Communist International is to organise an armed struggle for the overthrow of the international bourgeoisie and the establishment of an International Soviet Republic as a transition to the complete abolition of the Capitalist State."

**PARTY OR MASS.**

The continual claim of Communists and others is that we must be with the great masses of the working class. If the masses want "immediate demands" and reform agitations then we must go with them in this policy. Shout 44 hours and 4 pounds per week or nationalisation of coal mines or any other plank the masses take up. Sometimes this leads to quarrels about which reform should be supported. McDonald, Mitchell & Co. shout Weir houses whilst the other section wants a different kind of steel house or brick one. Mitchell accuses Geo. Hicks, of the Builders, of signing a report in favour of the weird houses and Hicks tells *Forward* readers he is sorry he ever did such a thing. So the reformers, with their crowds of supporters, unite the workers by fighting about the kind of plaster to apply to capitalism. Yet, those who think we must join the large numbers, are always talking of Glorious Russia, the very country where Lenin and other Bolsheviks refused coalition with the much more numerous Menshevik and Social Revolutionary elements, though these parties had behind them the bulk of the workers and peasants. Lenin himself says in his pamphlet, "Towards Soviets":—

"Is it not more honourable for the internationalists at such a moment to be able to resist the fumes that stupefy the 'masses,' than to 'desire to remain' with

the masses, i.e., to give way to the general intoxication? Have we not witnessed, in all the belligerent European countries, how the jingoes defended themselves on the plea of desiring 'to remain with the masses'? Is it not essential to be able for a certain time to be in a minority against the 'mass' intoxication? Is not just the work of propagandists essential precisely at the present moment, in order to set free the proletarian line of policy from the 'mass' effect of the chauvinist and lower middle class intoxication? It is just the fused state of the masses, proletarian and non-proletarian, without any class distinction within them, that constitutes one of the conditions of the rise of chauvinist epidemic. To speak contemptuously of 'a group of propagandists' of the proletarian tendency, seems to be a little out of place."

Our work is not to pander to the prejudices of the ignorant but to win the workers' minds for Socialism. Not by agreeing with their unsound ideas but by replacing these wrong notions with sound knowledge.

**IS MARTYRDOM THE TEST OF TRUTH?**

Amongst the ideas which pass for argument with the Communists is the notion that their party is right because their leaders are imprisoned.

If this idea was sound, we should follow the crowd of various speakers and writers who have suffered imprisonment. Pacifists and Suffragettes, Anarchists and Syndicalists, and Reformers of every shade who at one time or another have been imprisoned.

If this policy were correct, the terrorists, nihilists, social revolutionaries, mensheviks, are the best parties to follow because they have suffered imprisonment and death in larger numbers than the Bolsheviks. In fact, the opponents of Lenin in Russia used that very argument. They claimed their parties had suffered untold tortures and exile under Czarism and therefore claimed they were most feared by the despots. Look again at the Anarchists and other propagandists of deed. Have they not been hounded and imprisoned the world over, from Kropotkin to Emma Goldman? Why not support them on that account? The industrial workers of the world in the United States have been jailed and brutally

beaten in great numbers. Did that stop the Communist International from declaring them reactionary? Did it stop the Communists in America opposing them outside and breaking them up from within?

This line of shallow reasoning so common with Communists now, is an example of their general shallowness. One minute they want to be with the masses, the next minute they "glory" in being picked out from among them and imprisoned.

But their cry of martyrdom is a thin cry. Their policy naturally invited prosecution in the same way as the reactionary policy of sabotage advocacy did years ago. It was likely to be a nuisance to the Capitalists or at least some Capitalists thought so.

The Communists differed in no way from similar elements in trying to get off. From an array of counsel to pleading they were out for higher wages, shorter hours, etc., and to seeking to put their theses in the background—these attempts to escape imprisonment take the edge off their cry of martyrdom.

It is not for us, however, to let the Capitalists choose our party for us. It is for us to examine policies and judge whether such policies will be effective for emancipation. We do not let the brutality of the Capitalists blind us to the futility of the C.P.

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**THOSE ELUSIVE PROFITS.****ECONOMICS FROM A SILK HAT.**

A few weeks ago the "Daily Herald" published extracts from the "Economist" showing that while wages have suffered substantial reductions during the past three years the average profits of some fifteen hundred companies have been steadily rising. It followed this up with the revolutionary proposal that Mr. Churchill should increase the income tax on the larger bugs.

Such unwonted temerity on the part of "Labour's only Daily," could not pass uncensured by its Liberal tutors; and the following day there appeared in the "Westminster Gazette" a correction of the Rooster's "fundamental errors" which reduced that lusty bird to silence.

Here is some of the stuff which the "Herald" could not answer, although it can find plenty of space for Mrs. Leonora Eyle's accounts of her hunt for God (who has, it seems, got himself lost), and similar rubbish.

"As to profits—being something the 'dividend-makers' do not get, what does the D.H. think is done with the profits? Even that part which goes to 'dividend-takers' is spent on goods which 'dividend-makers' receive wages for producing."

"That proportion of profits which is utilised in restoring plant and machinery similarly goes to pay wages to the workers in the industries concerned." ("W.G." 20/1/26).

Let any irreverent reader feels tempted to explode in ribald laughter; let me solemnly assure him that this statement is made by no less an august personage than the W.G.'s City Editor; and let me further insist upon the necessity of taking him seriously, for the views he expresses are accepted by millions of our fellow-workers even to-day.

The possibility of advancing "arguments" such as those quoted arises from the illusion created by money in the process of circulation. The exchange of objects of utility is obscured by the commodity-nature of these objects. What appears to take place is an exchange of values expressed in the form of money.

Thus our City Editor would have us believe that in parting with the money-form of his profits the dividend-taker parts with the profits themselves! What he has actually done, however, is merely to change

their form. Thus whether the profits are spent on personal requirements or plant and machinery they remain the property of the dividend-takers and not of the workers.

The fact that they are paid wages for producing Rolls-Royces does not enable the workers to ride about in them; nor does the similar case of other workers enable them to become the owners of factories, railways, docks, etc.

Let us turn the matter the other way round. The workers spend their wages upon food, clothing, shelter, etc., necessary to enable them to exist and produce wealth. The sale of food, etc., is carried on for profit. In selling goods to the workers the capitalists therefore are simply realising the profits (produced in the factories) in a money form. If we argued as does our City Editor, we should urge that our wages really go to the Capitalists, since they are spent in the manner above stated. Any such argument, however, would not alter the fact that the workers and not the Capitalists consume the impure food, shoddy clothing, and jerry-built structures that wages buy.

The most important point, however, which the Editor ignores, is the fact that in selling their power to labour in return for wages, the workers part with the force which produces all wealth. The wealth produced belongs to the purchaser of labour-power (i.e., the employer) as a matter of course, and he realises both wages and profits in the sale of his goods.

One piece of confusion which is surprising even in a City Editor is the statement that a portion of profits is "utilised for restoring plant"! What about raw material? Has not that also to be "restored"? Apparently the Editor does not grasp the fact that in transforming raw material and machinery, etc., into finished articles, the workers *preserve* the value of the materials consumed. The restoration, therefore, is made from the return of the original capital and not from profits. The *increase* of capital from profits is, of course, another matter.

The Editor then tells us that "wastefulness is bad" because it "consumes capital needlessly." What becomes of his former argument that all expenditure employs labour, whatever its form? His standard of "goodness" or "badness" is, of course, a Capitalist one. If, instead of rioting in luxury, Capitalists invested all

their profits in industry, perhaps the W.G. man will explain what would happen to the workers in the luxury trades or, for that matter, in the trades in which the superabundance of capital was invested?

His closing paragraph, however, is a gem! After stating that the increase of profit must be the object of all trade and all production he says: "That the margin of profit at present is not large enough is proved by the existence of unemployment and distress." Unable to market the wealth produced like water by the workers, the exploiting class have the cool cheek to suggest, through their mouthpieces, the pressmen, that not enough wealth is produced. Could anything give clearer evidence, fellow workers, of the hopelessness of the present system of society from your point of view. Could you ask for a more damning proof of the intellectual bankruptcy of the class which robs you?

E.B.

**WHO ARE THE PUBLIC?**

The protracted "crisis" in the mining industry has given rise to much talk in the Press and elsewhere concerning the rights of the public in relation thereto. This is, of course, by no means unusual. Whenever the workers in any large industry, supplying a commodity or service in common use, offer resistance to attempts on the part of their exploiters to increase the rate of exploitation, they are attacked on all sides as opponents of the "public well-being." Section after section of the working class have had this accusation made against them in turn until it is perfectly clear that whoever the "public" may be, they certainly do not include the workers, although these latter comprise the overwhelming majority of the population.

A somewhat different aspect of the matter is presented in an article recently published in the "Daily News" (26/1/26) entitled "The Case for the Public." Herein it is the mineowners who are taken to task for asserting their absolute right to their property, irrespective of the "interests of the public."

According to the Cocoa Rag the State (representing the interests of the public) tolerates and encourages private property in all sorts of things in the belief that the public interest is best served so; but there are, it seems, exceptions, and the "News"

goes on to give a list of instances during the war of the State interfering with private property in the public interest.

Returning to the mineowners, we are told that the public has a great interest in the efficiency of the pits since this is an important element in price! Here we seem to be getting to the core of the matter.

Who are concerned with the price of coal? Not the workers, certainly; though fatuous "leaders" endeavour to persuade them to that effect. Experience has shown that an all round lowering of prices is rapidly followed by an all round lowering of wages and that the worker has nothing to gain by a policy of cheapness. On the contrary, efficiency and economy under capitalism simply involve the squeezing of more wealth out of fewer workers and a consequent increase in the unemployed.

The "News" advocates short hours and high wages—on the basis of a readiness to instal labour-saving devices! All of which goes to show that it is not concerned with the interests of the workers but with cheaper coal. Again, in whose interest? Obviously, in the interests of the rest of the Capitalist class, who depend upon coal for the carrying on of their various profit-making concerns and who want cheaper power of all kinds in order to compete more effectively with their foreign rivals for the markets of the world.

It is significant of the degraded level to which the miners have been pushed that the Capitalist press should turn its guns for the nonce from them to their immediate exploiters. It is still more significant that the State, the executive committee of the Capitalist class, should have found it necessary to subsidise the owners rather than force through a further reduction. The "Labour" and "Communist" leaders who hailed "Red Friday" as a victory for the workers, showed thereby the abysmal futility of their leadership—to the workers.

Nothing but the sheer impossibility of reducing wages in the mining industry (without imposing heavier burdens upon the local rates) induced the Government to grant the subsidy. The resources of local bodies in the industrial areas generally and the mining areas in particular, are already so low that constant recourse to State aid is necessary. For the master class as a whole, therefore, the subsidy was the more economical of two evils. All the same, it



is a burden they do not relish; hence they call on their fellow wolves to be less wasteful in their methods.

Thus our question is answered. "The State?" said the French king, "I am the State." "The public?" echoes the British bourgeois, "we are the public." Fellow workers, how long will it take you to realise the fact that you are disinherited outcasts in the land of your birth? That the power you place so readily in the hands of your "betters" is used only to flout and rob you?

"Public control," or "public ownership," whether introduced by Liberals, Labourites or "Communists," can avail you nothing. The better organisation of capitalism means the more thorough exploitation of your class. Leave, then, these empty discussions upon the "justice" or political morality of "public" versus "private" Capitalism to those whose interests are at stake. Your interest lies in achieving your emancipation from wage-slavery. Whether you be miner or railwayman, sheltered or unsheltered, "high" paid or "low" paid, you are paid merely the necessary cost of your maintenance so long as profits can be squeezed from your nerves and muscles. When they cannot, then your "public" heritage is—the "dole"!

Nothing can help you but the conscious organisation of your class for the conquest of political power and the introduction of a social order in which "private" or "public" property based on profit-making shall find no place, but in which the means of life shall be the common heritage of all.

E.B.

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## THE POLICY OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY.

An Answer to a Correspondent.

Mr. H. G. Robinson asks:—

1. Does not Marx say somewhere that a proletarian *dictatorship* must necessarily exist during the transition period from Capitalism to Socialism? In other words, do you think it possible to make the Capitalists hand over the spoils by simply *voting* for revolution, or will the workers be compelled to use some sort of physical force?

2. "Declaration of Principles" states that "as political parties are but the expression of class interests . . . the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to *every* other party." Does this apply to the Communist Party? Surely that party cannot be construed to be a *Capitalist* party, even though they may be "off the track"? Are they not *also* a working class party?

3. Could not members of the S.P. help Socialism by propaganda within the ranks of the Labour Party?

### ANSWERS.

1. This is partly answered elsewhere in this issue (see reply to "Anti-Parley") and has been dealt with at length in back numbers, to which you are referred. "Dictatorship" and "force" need careful definition to avoid the confusion which arises through attaching loose meanings. The vote does not itself abolish Capitalism; but the vote in the hands of an organised Socialist working class in advanced "democratic" Capitalist countries, gives control of the machinery of force, the army, etc. Whether and how that force will need to be used depends on the Capitalist minority, who will then, if they resist the majority, be rebels. If the questioner means by "dictatorship" the special steps taken in such an emergency, then we can admit the possibility of such a "dictatorship" democratically and constitutionally maintained by the working class majority against the minority, which is offering armed resistance. Usually, however, in the mouths of Communists, for instance, "dictatorship" means the rule of a *minority* based on open force. In Russia such a dictatorship has been in existence, the dictatorship of a few hundred thousand Communists over a

population of millions. No evidence has ever been offered by the Communists entitling them to claim that Marx endorsed such anti-democratic, and for the purposes of Socialism, such futile procedure.

2. This is a generalisation explaining the existence of political parties, not the *sentiments* of their members. We do not suggest that Communists, any more than Conservatives, are actuated by motives of malice towards the working class. But it is not, therefore, a "working class party," except in the sense that its supporters are largely workers—and this applies equally to the Liberal and Conservative parties. Our main differences from the Communists are concerned with fundamentals of Socialist policy. We cannot both be advocating the correct method, and wrong methods—minority action, armed revolt, etc., are no less dangerous because the advocates are sincere. In our view sound principles clearly understood are of absolutely first importance to the workers; both soundness and clarity would be sacrificed if we ceased to oppose policies we regard as suicidal.

3. If Socialists joined the Labour Party they could do so only by accepting a constitution and programme they regard as fundamentally anti-Socialist. How, in face of this dishonesty, could they consistently and persuasively urge the need for political honesty and plain speaking? They would, too, as many have found by experience, have the bulk of their energies absorbed in explaining, not Socialism, but their inability to agree with the policy of the party to which they belonged.

Lastly, it is assumed that the Labour Party would allow membership to those who were hostile to the principles of the Labour Party, as that Party is bent on getting non-Socialist votes it would gain nothing by admitting Socialists unless the latter consented to remain silent about Socialism. It would, as is shown by its rejection of the Communists, decline to retain Socialists except on terms which would make Socialist propaganda impossible. ED. COM.

### DEBATES.

Our Opponents Unwilling to Meet Us.

Our efforts to arrange debates with the I.L.P., even when the challenge has been offered by an I.L.P. Branch, have been in vain, owing to the expressed refusal of their Head Office to permit a debate with

us. Last month a challenge thrown out by the West Leyton Conservative Association was at once taken up by us with similar result. Their first excuse, so thin that it was subsequently dropped, was that their finances would not permit. Secondly, it was admitted by their representative that when they offered to debate with Socialists they meant "the so-called Labour Party," and finally, we were told in effect that our membership is too small.

At the same time an endeavour was being made to arrange a debate with Mr. Saklatvala, M.P., on the respective merits of ourselves and the Communist Party.

At first Mr. Saklatvala expressed himself as being "only too pleased," merely pointing out that he wished those who dissented from his views would challenge him at his meetings. He must remember, however, that it is not the practice at his or other Communist meetings to allow ample time for questions, or to allow opponents the platform. While we regret this unwillingness to encourage unfettered discussion, we do not make a habit of disturbing the meetings of opponents because their method of conducting differs from our own.

Although up to this point the correspondence on our side had been conducted by our Battersea Branch, they had made it clear that they would obtain the endorsement of our Executive Committee, and the Communist Head Office were approached to learn if they would give similar endorsement to Mr. Saklatvala.

As the subject of debate was agreed to be the merits of the two organisations, this seemed to us not only reasonable but necessary. Mr. Saklatvala nevertheless strongly objected. He then expressed his willingness to debate "my exposition of my political views or activities," but "I am not interested in what may be claimed to be the official programme of your party or of mine." At the same time he made the curious claim that he was interested in us and our challenge only because our Battersea members are constituents of his. Now it is obvious that a useful debate cannot take place between the principles of an organisation on the one hand, and the "views and activities" of an individual responsible to no party and bound by no known and definite principles on the other, especially as Mr. Saklatvala confessed that he did not



know our policy, anyway. As the Communist Head Office did not even acknowledge our letters the whole affair has fallen through.

It affords one or two points of interest. The first is the unwillingness of the Communists to risk their case in debate at the present time. Judging, too, from Mr. Saklatvala's first willing acceptance and later withdrawal from the debate on the terms originally proposed, it would seem reasonable to assume that their unwillingness was intimidated to him by his own Headquarters.

It is also somewhat astounding that a professed Communist owing nominal allegiance to the Moscow International should accept the orthodox political view of the obligations of an M.P. to his constituents. It shows vividly how far from the class conceptions of Socialism a Communist M.P. (elected on a Reformist Programme) can be driven by circumstances. Who does not remember how the Communists *used* to assert the iniquity of "geographical representation" and demand industrial representation through the Soviets?

It is, of course, true that Mr. Saklatvala has always been an advocate of Nationalism in various forms—that is, an advocate of the "rights" of those exploiters and exploited who happen to dwell in a certain geographical area. But while "India for the Indians" is not Socialism, it does at least not sound so absurd as "Battersea for the Battersea-ites." H.

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Just look at some of the cross-headings. "Who are the working class?" Of course, you know in a rough, general sort of way, the answer to that question. But when someone points to a Capitalist who works hard, and to a workman who obviously doesn't, and challenges you to place them, how do you reply?

With our little book you can flatten him out. What is better, you can convince him. There are no dogmatic assertions, no equivocal statements, no vicious attacks upon individuals. Just plain simple appeals to everyday experience.

Then: "The Cause of Poverty"; "The Cause of Unemployment"; "Is the Struggle for Higher Wages Necessary?" How often are these questions asked? Here is the answer to each of them, carefully worked out, with reference to authorities. "What is a Social System?" "The Basis of Modern Society"; "The Basis of the

Future Social System." Here is food for thought. The pamphlet provides the meat. How the essence of Marx, Engels and Morgan has been compressed within 48 small pages, without apparent cramming, is little short of marvellous. Is there any real necessity for Revolution? The pamphlet devotes three pages to the question, "Has The Hour Come?" Six pages are occupied with the answer to that. "What are The Essentials of the Political Organisation?" Here they are all carefully reasoned out on the last five pages, clause by clause, and item by item.

For the public speaker, or for those useful little chats with one's fellows, the pamphlet is indispensable. Filled, as it is, with scores of verbal illustrations of the points dealt with, it should be found more convincing than hours of argument. For instance, you are just arguing with a "Labour" man on the crass stupidity of his leaders, in asserting that greater production will benefit the working class. You quote him the American automobile industry. You turn to page 17 of the pamphlet and show him the figures from 1899 to 1923. You give him reference to the official report. You prove to him that in that industry the productivity of each man employed has increased 10 times in the 24 years since 1899. Unless he is entirely hopeless, you give him furiously to think. Follow up with the facts about the coal industry, the iron and steel industries, etc., and his defeat becomes a rout. You then sell him a copy.

Look at the number of times Campbell-Bannerman's famous pronouncement that a third of the population are constantly on the verge of starvation, has been quoted. When did he say it? What was his authority? Our pamphlet gives both. Is it true that bricklayers are deliberately slower than before the war? We give the official figures given before Lord Bradbury's Court of Enquiry in 1925. Does the adoption of machinery *actually* displace labour, or is it eventually absorbed by increased demand for cheapened products? (A favourite with Liberals, this.) In spite of condensation, this is convincingly dealt with. All those little "teasers" that give the novice pause are held up to the light and shown for the transparent frauds they are. If, under Capitalism, the lot of the worker is to get steadily worse, why struggle? Also, if that be true, why are wages higher in America

than here; and higher here than on the Continent? Yes! They are dealt with, too. And not only dealt with, but answered. Answered with a wealth of quotation and illustration. And so on. At the very least you will want two copies of the booklet; one for your own personal use, and one to sell or lend as occasion offers. Why not help the Socialist Party in a practical way by buying at least one copy a month, when you buy your Standard? You will be sustained by the reflection that in helping the Socialist Party, you will be helping yourself. It cannot be too often repeated that Socialism is not inevitable in the sense that the return of the Seasons, the alternation of day and night, the ebb and flow of the tides are inevitable. Socialism is the first conscious putting forth of human genius in a concrete endeavour to make the earth a common human possession. Humanly speaking, it appears to us to be humanity's next step. We recognise that the process can be helped or retarded. We can form but the merest estimate of the extent to which selfishness and stupidity may retard the change, but we are certain that each and every new member of the Socialist Party hastens its coming. We send out our pamphlet with the sure conviction that its wide circulation will result in a great access of members to our Party, and the speedy realisation of our hopes—**SOCIALISM.** W.T.H.

With us it cannot be a mere matter of a change in the form of private property, but of destroying it as an institution; not in hushing up class antagonisms but in abolishing all classes; not in the improvement of present-day society but in the foundation of a new society. (Karl Marx—The Address of the Communist League.)

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- Fridays:** West Ham, Water Lane, Stratford, 7.30 p.m.  
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**SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road. Discussion last Thursday in month. Open to all.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Communications to E. Jesper, 74 Murdoch-rd., Birmingham. Branch meets A.E.U. Institute, Spiceal-st., every Saturday.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions every Wednesday at 8.45 p.m.—all invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to A. Jacobs, Sec., 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at 141 Bow-rd.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Andrew Porter, 12a, Kings-rd., Portobello.

**GLASGOW.**—Communications to Sec., J. Higgins, 816, Rutherglen-rd., Oatlands, Glasgow.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Saturdays, 7 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare Street, Hackney. Discussions after Branch Business. Communications to Secretary at above address.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., W. Rowney, 43, Paddock St., Hanley, Staffs. Open to all.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to W. Baker, 35 Alma-st., Kentish Town, N.W.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., 8, Cheltenham rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Communications to Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Sec., A. Yeomans, 15, University-rd., Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 17, Antil-road, Broad Lane, Tottenham, N.17. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce-grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to S. E. Williams, 85, Park-road, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Mondays at 8.30 p.m. at 162, High Street, Watford.

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**WOOD GREEN.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## SOCIALISM AND MATERIALISM.

Any person lacking previous knowledge of the subject can hardly fail to be confused by the contradictory pronouncements issued in the name of Socialism regarding the basis of society. A few days ago, for instance, Mr. Robert Young, M.P., speaking at a Brotherhood meeting, pleaded for a "new society based upon Christianity." This represents the prevailing attitude among the "Socialists" (so-called) of the Labour Party. On the other hand, we find supporters of that Party claiming to be atheists or materialists, and professing to derive their "Socialism" from some abstract ideal of "justice" or "brotherhood."

The Socialist Party is the only one in which a clear and consistent attitude on this question is to be found. This attitude frankly rejects any attempt to explain society in terms of "ideals," whether Christian or otherwise. It points out that the necessity of obtaining a livelihood (and not mere opinions or sentiments) is the real foundation of social existence; and that, consequently, the conditions under which that livelihood is obtained determine, in the long run, the form taken by ideals of every kind.

This attitude is, of course, very frequently misunderstood. The average person, accustomed to look at matters metaphysically, jumps to the conclusion that the Socialist is only concerned with filling his belly, as a matter of philosophical principle, and he usually dishes out some would-be serious reflections upon the necessity for "higher" things, such as morals, etc. He fails entirely to see that his so-called "higher things," including morals, are themselves the outcome of a particular set of social conditions which depend in turn

upon a certain stage of economic development.

The fact is, of course, that the Socialist has ceased to regard himself as an independent entity, in some way separate from the society of which he forms a molecule. He looks at the whole matter from the standpoint of the class to which he (as a rule) belongs, *i.e.*, the working class. Even when this is pointed out, however, the bourgeois-minded objector invariably protests against what he calls "class-selfishness"; as though this phenomenon was the cause instead of the effect of existing conditions.

The class-war is the basis of the Socialist movement. Does that mean that the Socialist creates the class-war? On the contrary, the Socialist merely perceives an already existing fact (to which his fellow-slave is either wholly or partially blind), and further realises that this war can terminate in only one way, *i.e.*, the emancipation of the workers through the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of the common ownership of the means of life.

Thus, according to the Socialist, the ownership of the means of life is the central, basic factor in the matter, not some fantastic dream of a perfect social state which merely reflects the imperfections of that which exists at present. But why must the means of life be commonly owned? Whence arises *this* idea? Does it fall from the clouds? By no means! It is the logically inevitable product of the stage of development reached by those means of life, or, in other words, the instruments of production and distribution of wealth. It is technical advance, not mere speculation, which necessitates social change.

Still our opponent does not understand us.



"Under your proposal," he protests, "men and women will be exclusively greedy unless some sound ethical instruction is given to them." Well, the answer is simple. We have had centuries of ethical instruction of various kinds. The ancient Greek philosophers ransacked their imaginations in vain for some ideal principle to inculcate into the minds of their followers which would lead to individual happiness and social harmony. The Christian Fathers saw in preparation for the hereafter the surest guide to the elimination of the pressing desires of the here and now. With what success? Greed is a more firmly entrenched social element than ever. Quite irrespective of what their opinions may be, men and women are compelled to look after "number one"; and failure to do this spells annihilation.

Again, this is the result, not of philosophy but of the conditions arising from the private property basis of society. Frankly egotistic philosophies have, of course, been advanced, especially during the nineteenth century, but these are the outcome of the conditions rather than the cause of men's attitude towards one another. Human history is, in fact, eloquent upon the poverty of philosophy. The mission of the Socialist is not merely to explain the world, but to change it. This, however, demands the practical application of the scientific method to the economic problem.

This problem may be stated thus. Why is it that, with greater powers of production than have ever existed in human history, numerous people exist in want, and that, broadly, the mass of the population who produce wealth receive in return a smaller proportion of that wealth than ever before? This problem cannot be solved by chloroform, whether administered by Tory Prime Ministers or Labour M.P.s. Christianity and the "spirit of goodwill" can avail us nothing. Their admonitions are addressed to the individual and ignore the social forces of which he is the product. They seek to mould his conduct, it is true, but in a reactionary direction. Only by understanding economic development and consciously co-operating with its established tendencies can we rise above it, thus mastering instead of being enslaved by it.

The politicians of all parties outside the Socialist Party trade upon the economic ignorance of the mass of the workers, but that does not prevent them from stimulating

their blind greed. Every proposal which appears in their election addresses is calculated to obtain the support of those who do not realise the futility of such measures from the standpoint of working-class interests. Protection, Free Trade, Land Taxation, Nationalisation, the Capital Levy! "What have these measures to do with ethics?" we may ask. They are merely the means by which sections of the master-class seek both to serve their own interests and hoodwink their slaves. Some high-sounding phrase such as the "public interest" or the "welfare of the community" is used to camouflage their motives and blind the workers, who vainly look for some material gain from these measures.

The Socialist, therefore, has no need to apologise for appealing to the workers to use their intelligence in their own material interests. Our moralising masters have looked after theirs long enough. From the dawn of history society has rested upon the exploitation of the workers. This was inevitable so long as the limited powers of production only allowed of comfort and luxury for a few. To-day, however, those powers are so great that there is no longer any reason why anyone should lack all that is necessary to complete health and leisure for self-development. Our masters pretend to believe in sacrifice. Let them set us an example by forfeiting the privilege of living on our backs. We cannot sacrifice that which is not ours. Let the workers beware, however, from relying on the sincerity of their exploiters.

The increase in the powers of production is, of course, no miracle. It has been accomplished only by the application of science to industry, involving the co-operation of masses of workers on an unprecedented scale. From puny individual instruments such as the spade and hoe, we have advanced to the giant tractor-plough, which can only exist because millions of workers are busy in forges and mills throughout the world. And what applies to one industry applies to all that are of general importance. Here and there, maybe, technical difficulties or the existence of a cheaper supply of labour retard progress on mechanical lines, but the essential fact remains that, for society as a whole, the methods of industry have been revolutionised during the past century and a half.

The new powers of production, social

though they are in character, remain in the hands of a class of private owners, who perform no useful function in return. Their only concern is to reap the fruits of the labours of society which are periodically disorganised through the conflict in the ranks of the parasites. For the so-called struggle for existence is a struggle not between individuals as such but between competing masses of capital, of which individuals are but the legal appendages. The survival of the fittest has nothing to do with the personal qualities of the capitalist who survives. It is merely the survival of the more efficient instruments of production of which he is the fortunate possessor. The ruined capitalist occasionally ends his existence as an individual upon his descent into the proletariat, but more frequently he re-adapts himself to his changed environment in which he finds an entirely different form of struggle in progress.

Among the workers the problem of the individual is not how to exploit, but how to secure the opportunity to be exploited; not how to amass wealth, but rather how to find someone who is willing to purchase one's power to produce it. The fruits of victory for the individual capitalist are more opportunities for ease and luxury than he can personally utilise. A successful hunt for a job, however, spells for the worker merely a ceaseless round of toil, for a wage which buys the bare necessities of existence.

For the workers, therefore, individualism is a bankrupt creed. They are constantly involved in a struggle against the effects of the whole system of private property. In this struggle the inexorable logic of facts convinced them of the necessity of co-operation long before the Socialist arrived upon the scene. The Trade Unions, for instance, originated, not from mere theorising, but from the practical pressure of events in the industrial sphere. They were the inevitable offspring of the industrial revolution. For a time they were successful in lessening the suffering of the workers, but the limits of their powers were soon reached, and to-day it is evident that a wider and deeper mode of co-operation between the workers is necessary to effect any improvement in their condition. The concentration of capital and the constant advance of machine industry makes anything less than class organisation practically futile.

Such organisation, however, involves the

clear and definite object of expropriation of the possessing class. So long as production is carried on for profit, so long will the workers endure the effects of the ensuing anarchy in society. Every technical advance to-day is made as a result of competition for profit at the workers' expense. Every successful attempt at obtaining a higher wage-rate thus merely stimulates the scrapping of obsolete methods of robbing the workers, the increase of the unemployed, the intensification of the struggle for jobs, greater speeding up and insecurity.

The social character of the means of production indicates the solution, i.e., social ownership of those means, combined with production, for the use of all without distinction of race or sex. The conduct of production and distribution in accordance with a social plan will give mankind for the first time the conscious control of their means of living. Henceforward waste and stagnation will be eliminated for the benefit of all. The resources of the world are barely scratched. Whole continents cry out for development, but capitalism cannot respond. To attempt to do so merely intensifies the antagonisms within itself. The quest for new markets and sources of raw material is speedily followed by war, resulting in widespread ruin and reaction. The international co-operation of the working class alone can make peaceful progress possible.

The recognition of the above facts is the materialism to which Socialists plead guilty. Only when the satisfaction of purely animal wants is definitely secured to all will the opportunity arise for the universal cultivation of distinctively human and social qualities. By conditions which allow for individual development and expression, and not by moral and legal repression, will social harmony be obtained.

E. B.

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**MARX ON FREE TRADE.***(Continued from a previous issue).*

But what of that? The class will still exist; nay, more, it will have increased.

But this is not all. The progress of industry creates less and less expensive means of subsistence. Thus spirits have taken the place of beer, cotton that of wool and linen, and potatoes that of bread.

Thus, as means are constantly being found for the maintenance of labour on cheaper and more wretched food, the minimum of wages is constantly sinking. If these wages began by letting the man work to live, they end by forcing him to live the life of a machine. His existence has no other value than that of a simple productive force, and the capitalist treats him accordingly. This law of the commodity labour, of the minimum of wages, will be confirmed in proportion as the supposition of the economists, Free Trade, becomes an actual fact. Thus, of two things one: either we must reject all political economy based upon the assumption of Free Trade, or we must admit that under this same Free Trade the whole severity of the economic laws will fall upon the workers.

To sum up, what is Free Trade under the present conditions of society? Freedom of capital. When you have torn down the few national barriers which still restrict the free development of capital, you will merely have given it complete freedom of action. So long as the relation of wage-labour to capital is permitted to exist, no matter how favourable the conditions under which you accomplish the exchange of commodities, there will always be a class which exploits and a class which is exploited. It is really difficult to understand the presumption of the Free Traders who imagine that the more advantageous application of capital will abolish the antagonism between industrial capitalists and wage-workers. On the contrary. The only result will be that the antagonism of these two classes will stand out more clearly.

Let us assume for a moment that there are no more Corn laws or national or municipal import duties; that in a word all the accidental circumstances that to-day the working-man may look upon as a cause of his miserable conditions have vanished, and we shall remove so many curtains that hide from his eyes his real enemy.

He will see that capital released from all

trammels will make him no less a slave than capital trammelled by import duties.

Gentlemen! Do not be deluded by the abstract word Liberty! Whose Liberty? Not the liberty of one individual in relation to another, but the liberty of capital to crush the worker.

Why should you desire farther to sanction unlimited competition with this idea of freedom, when the idea of freedom itself is only the product of a social condition based upon Free Competition?

We have shown what sort of fraternity Free Trade begets between the different classes of one and the same nation. The fraternity which Free Trade would establish between nations of the earth would not be more real; to call cosmopolitan exploitation universal brotherhood is an idea that could only be engendered in the brain of the bourgeoisie. Every one of the destructive phenomena which unlimited competition gives rise to within any one nation is reproduced in more gigantic proportions in the market of the world. We not pause any longer upon Free Trade sophisms on this subject, which are worth just as much as the articles of our prize essayists. Messrs. Hope, Morse, and Greg.

For instance, we are told that Free Trade would create an international division of labour, and thereby give to each country those branches of production most in harmony with its natural advantages.

You believe, perhaps, gentlemen, that the production of coffee and sugar is the natural destiny of the West Indies.

Two centuries ago, nature, which does not trouble itself about commerce, had planted neither sugar-cane nor coffee trees there. And it may be that in less than half a century you will find there neither coffee nor sugar, for the East Indies, by means of cheaper production, have already successfully broken this so-called natural destiny of the West Indies.

And the West Indies, with their natural wealth, are as heavy a burden for England as the weavers of Dacca, who also were destined from the beginning of time to weave by hand.

One other circumstance must not be forgotten, namely, that, just as everything has become a monopoly, there are also nowadays some branches of industry which prevail over all others, and secure to the nations which especially foster them the command

**SOCIALISM AND THE FUNDAMENTALS OF ANARCHISM**

We have received the following letter in criticism of our article on Socialism and Parliamentary Action which appeared in the March issue. Our answer to Mr. Beer follows his letter.

**NON-GOVERNMENTALISM.**

Concerning your reply to an article (Socialism and Parliamentary Action) for March last, while complimenting the S.S. for being the only paper to which we can refer for a clear exposition of the fundamentals of Socialism, I contend that you are exceedingly biased in so far as Anarchism is concerned. You mislead your readers into thinking that the Leninists, together with the admirers of G. A. Aldred and other such like gentry, are Anarchists because they may happen to advocate violence. Do not these people also advocate the Dictatorship of the Proletariat? And is this not Parliamentarism in its most despotic form? Have you never read literature by Socialists who have also advocated violence? And would you call them Anarchists because they have done so? Certainly not. It is simply their opinion of a method whereby they can accomplish their objective. I have often noticed statements to the effect in the S.S. that the time is ripe for Socialism, but the reason we have not got it is because the people neither understand or want it; but when the people do want it they will have it, and not until then. This is just what applies to Anarchism. You say that we have no alternative to Parliamentary action. Our alternative is simply to make our own contracts instead of other people making them for us; and to resist taxation because we object to paying the salaries of the officials by whom, and the machinery by which we are ground to powder. As far as our method is concerned, for now it is sufficient for us to advocate Anarchism. When a sufficient number of people understand, it is they who will determine their method, as conditions and circumstances are continually changing. Come, let's straiten ourselves out. Why not, instead of attacking methods of individuals, start discussing the fundamentals of the Philosophy of Anarchism?

(1) Has Society any more right to dominate the Individual than the Individual has to dominate Society?

of the world market. Thus in the commerce of the world cotton alone has much greater commercial importance than all the other raw materials used in the manufacture of clothing. It is indeed ridiculous for the Free Traders to refer to the few specialities in each branch of industry, throwing them into the scales against the products used in everyday consumption, and produced more cheaply in those countries in which manufacture is most highly developed.

If the Free Traders cannot understand how one nation can grow rich at the expense of another, you need not wonder, since these same gentlemen also refuse to understand how in the same country one class can enrich itself at the expense of another.

Do not imagine, gentlemen, that in criticising freedom of commerce we have the least intention of defending protection.

One may be opposed to constitutionalism without being in favour of absolutism.

Moreover, the protective system is nothing but a means of establishing manufacture upon a large scale in any given country; that is to say, of making it dependent upon the market of the world; and from the moment that dependence upon the market of the world is established, there is more or less dependence upon Free Trade too. Besides this the protective system helps to develop free competition within a nation. Hence we see that in countries where the bourgeoisie is beginning to make itself felt as a class, in Germany, for example, it makes great efforts to obtain protective duties. They serve the bourgeoisie as weapons against Feudalism and absolute monarchy, as a means for the concentration of its own powers for the realisation of Free Trade within the country.

But generally speaking, the Free Trade system is destructive. It breaks up old nationalities and carries the antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie to the uttermost point. In a word, the system of commercial freedom hastens the Social Revolution. In this revolutionary sense alone, gentlemen, I am in favour of Free Trade.

*(Conclusion).***STOCKPORT.**

Those interested in forming a branch of the Party in Stockport are invited to communicate with THE GENERAL SECRETARY, 17, MOUNT PLEASANT, LONDON, W.C.1.



(2) Does Society know better than me how I prefer to enjoy myself?

(3) Does not Socialism imply two classes: the Governing and the Governed?

(4) To whom does the product of a man's labour belong?

To the above question I may add that if you answer it as a Socialist it is due to the fact that you fail to understand the exchange of equivalents.

(5) Has Society any more right to exploit the Individual than the Individual, or a set of Individuals, have to exploit Society?

(6) Does not Socialism, Communism, Toryism, Trade Unionism, etc., stand for the subordination of the Individual to Society?

(7) Can there be freedom in Society whilst not even one man in Society has the liberty to think, speak, and act in accordance with his own desires, so long as he does not infringe upon the liberty of another?

(8) Is not the goal of human happiness, Liberty?

P.S.—I regret lack of space. I hope you will publish this in full. If you are prepared to go deeper into this matter, say so in your reply. If it is not published, you need not make any explanation, as I shall know.

Yours for Liberty,  
Deptford, S.E. A. E. BEER.

### OUR REPLY.

The reference to violence in the above letter is no answer to our position. Violence has been advocated and used by defenders of capitalism of all types, conservative and reformist. That is true. The special kinds of violence advocated and used by Anarchists we have shown to be not only useless but thoroughly dangerous to a working class struggling for emancipation. The advocacy of barricades by our March correspondent showed the futility of the opponents of political action, and the above letter offers no alternative to the policy of the conquest of political power. The opposition to political action is an Anarchist attitude, whatever the Anti-Politicals may call themselves.

Our correspondent's objection to paying for the cost of governments "to grind us to powder," is not a working-class objection. As our March article showed, the working class do not pay for the cost of govern-

ment. The workers receive on the average just enough to live on, and the capitalists therefore must pay (out of the surplus extracted from the workers) for the cost of government and officialdom. Hence their cry of "economy."

The numbered questions asked by Mr. Beer are answered under the same number:—

(1) Rights depend upon power to enforce them. Society is compelled to act against the individual whose actions interfere with the well-being of the mass. But the class-divided society of to-day involves the mass being subjected by the few. A Socialist society means that the population will have interests in common, and the opportunity of dominating will have passed with the passing of property and class rule.

(2) Mr. Beer quite possibly knows best how he prefers to enjoy himself, but, in doing so, as an individualist, he may quite possibly make it impossible for others to enjoy themselves. The capitalist enjoying himself in his own way spells misery for millions.

(3) To ask such a question as whether Socialism implies two classes, governed and governing—implies complete ignorance of Socialism. Socialism means common ownership of the means of wealth production and distribution, and, therefore, the abolition of classes. Full and real democratic control under Socialism also implies the absence of classes.

(4) Asking to whom does the product of a man's labour belong implies that we are living in an economic world where an individual produces something by himself. Modern industry is co-operative, and any article is the result of the combined and co-operative labours of many workers. To-day the product of the workers' labour belongs legally to the employer; in a Socialist society the product will be used and enjoyed by the wealth producers alone, as there will be no owning or employing class to exploit the workers.

(5) This question ignores social evolution altogether. Exploitation depends upon suitable economic conditions, and until they have arisen it is not possible. The words right and rights are used by our critic, but never defined. "The right" to exploit is useless unless the power to exploit is supplied by the existence of an owning and non-owning class side by side, so that those

without property are compelled to produce for the owners and to the owner's advantage. Exploitation was once necessary to the evolution of society, but it has carried us so far that it has now become a hindrance and a menace to the further evolution of society.

(6) Society, embracing all the individuals within it as an organic whole, is obviously paramount in those affairs that concern society as a whole as against the individual. A class-divided society does not involve questions of the individual versus society, but members of one class versus members of the other. A society of common interests like Socialism would be paramount in those affairs that concerned the social body. The affairs that are purely personal and do not involve social relations would be the concern of the individual alone.

(7) Freedom of speech and action are obviously limited under Capitalism in order to maintain Capitalist Class rule. They fear the spread of revolutionary knowledge. A Socialist system in its very nature would make for the free expression of the individual in his thoughts and actions as long as the individual did not become a danger to the lives and liberties of his fellows.

(8) Is Liberty the goal of human happiness? The use of sentimental expressions in common use and misuse may mean a thousand and one things. Anarchists and other dodgers of economic evolution like to talk in these phrases, as it sounds well and idealistic. But what do they mean? You might reverse the question and ask: Is happiness the goal of liberty? Happiness and liberty are both conditioned on economic life, and the economic evolution has made possible (although not actual) happiness for all. Liberty for the mass is certainly impossible in a slave society such as chattel slavery, feudalism or capitalism. Abstract liberty means nothing. Economic freedom is the key to the situation, and until it is won by the workers all political and other so-called liberties remain merely the privileges granted to slaves, privileges arising out of economic development. When economic freedom is won by the coming of Socialism, the other liberties will follow. But absolute liberty, such as Kropotkin talks of, for the individual is impossible outside of a desert island, where it becomes liberty to go insane or die. Social freedom

made possible for the worker by social growth and economic development will be a freedom invested with meaning by the possibilities that an advanced social world will usher in for each and all. In conclusion, we would say that these questions are suitable to an age of individualist thought, and apparently the questioner never thinks of what is made necessary by evolution, but simply disregards the needs of the situation and the possibilities at hand. He seems to think it is sufficient to think out some abstract principles of "right" and "justice," and to concern himself with the individual, forgetting the inter-dependence of each worker resulting from social production.

A. KOHN.

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## The Socialist Standard,

APRIL,



1926

### THE ENGINEERS AND COMMUNIST STRATEGY. ANOTHER "VICTORY" FOR THE "UNITED FRONT."

After being locked out for ten weeks, the Hoe engineers have returned to work on the employers' terms and in accordance with the advice of their leaders, local and national. On Tuesday, March 16th, the Communist Party issued a manifesto urging the strikers to "accept the decision of the National Council," "in the interests of the working-class movement." — "Daily Herald," 17/3/26.

Thus the united front is complete. Sir Alan Smith, Mr. J. T. Brownlie, and "the intelligent minority" are at one. For two years negotiations for a rise in wages in the engineering industry have been in progress, only to result in the unions being finally told that any attempt to enforce an increase would be met with the resistance of the whole organisation of the employers. The reply of the unions is to sanction local movements (for an increase) of a "constitutional" character. This means that the movements must conform to the procedure, provided for in the existing agreement between the employers and the unions, "for avoiding disputes" ("Daily Herald," 17/3/26). By thus tying the hands of their members in advance by the red tape of "conciliatory procedure," the leaders have doomed these movements to the same sterility as the national negotiations. Any real efforts to

enforce their demands will be met by the lock-out or the threat thereof; and this is what the leaders are determined to avoid, judging by their action over the Hoe dispute.

Where, then, do the workers stand? If the leaders, including the district committees, are in earnest in putting forward demands for increases, what explanation have they to offer for allowing a section of their members to be defeated when making those same demands? If they are afraid of a lock-out now, whence do they propose to derive their courage upon the inevitable failure of the local negotiations in the near future? How many years of parleying with the enemy is necessary in order to prove that there is no alternative to a fight?

Surely, fellow-workers, no more conclusive proof of our repeated criticism of Trade Unionism as it stands can be asked for than the patent futility of agreements with the bosses to avoid disputes. As well might two armies at war set down on paper a scheme for avoiding battles.

The Socialist Party has no illusions concerning the power of strikes. We have pointed out repeatedly the limits within which they can be successful. We do not encourage the workers in the fallacy that strikes will bring them nearer to their emancipation or substantially improve their position under capitalism. Especially do we advise the workers to avoid long strikes, which merely deplete the union funds at inopportune moments. This much, however, is clear—that so long as capitalism lasts, strikes are necessary as weapons of defence, as means of applying the brake upon the downward tendency of the workers' social position.

For this reason we counsel our fellow-slaves to beware of the "leaders," actual and potential. Keep the power in your own hands! The Hoe strikers made the fatal mistake at the last minute of leaving the matter in the hands of the committee, who promptly ordered them back to work. This sheep-like policy was commended by the Communist Party which thus, once more, proves its worthlessness to the workers.

If the Hoe men were justified from the standpoint of working-class interests in striking at all, then it was up to them to stick to their guns until it was proved that they were beaten. If they were beaten, then the fact should be frankly faced as such.

The Communist Party, however, is a stranger both to logic and honesty. Palpable failures are claimed as "successes," defeats as "victories," by these incompetent busybodies in their endeavour to create the illusion that they are "leading the masses in the every-day struggle against the bosses!" The nature of their ambitions, however, is made clear by their readiness to come to terms with the Trade-Union bureaucrats when given the chance. All they wish for is a share in the "swag." A chaotic "Labour" movement, political and industrial, offers tempting jobs. Ignorant of their class position, the workers demand leaders; and the Communists are willing to fill the bill for the price!

As for the "constitutional" issue, what a curious change of front for a party which has repeatedly advocated minority action! Perhaps the Hoe men were not sufficiently "intelligent"? As Socialists, we are believers in democracy. To look for democracy among the Trade Unions, however, is to ignore their political and economic ignorance at the present time. Unofficial strikes are the logical outcome of official inaction resulting from the apathy of the majority.

Bearing these facts in mind, we point once more to the necessity for the organisation of the workers for Socialism. Non-Socialist Trade Unionism holds no message for the working-class. It can lead only to an endless series of defeats. What is needed is a clear recognition of the fact that the interests of masters and slaves are irrevocably opposed; that nothing but the abolition of mastership, based upon class ownership of the means of life, will free the workers from the burden of robbery and degradation.

We call upon our fellow-slaves to unite as a class, to throw off their entangling "agreements" and "alliances" with the masters' representatives, both upon the industrial and the political field, to fight the class war to a victorious finish through the establishment of Socialism.

## NO COMPROMISE.

If the Socialist Party's policy can be summed up in a phrase, that phrase is "no compromise"; we are not phrase-worshippers, however, and therefore wish our phrases to be clearly and definitely understood.

The Socialist Party opposes all other political parties without exception, "whether

alleged labour or avowedly capitalist." The necessity for a party which is out for Socialism arises from the fact that the existing social order, which we call capitalism, holds no prospect of improvement for the majority of the population—the working-class. Parties which openly exist to preserve that social order, with or without modification, are therefore so many barriers to be surmounted before our goal can be achieved.

The simple, easily intelligible, fact is, nevertheless, frequently made the subject of misrepresentation on the part of some of our opponents. "Half a loaf is better than no bread" we are told, and the outsider is sometimes misled into thinking that the Socialist Party has a conscientious objection to accepting half-loaves, and he is seldom slow in voicing his contempt for such (quite imaginary) "pig-headedness" on our part. We have often observed, however, that people who lightly accept this view of the matter are not to be trusted to distinguish between half-loaves and packets of sawdust—between measures that might conceivably benefit the workers for a short period to some slight extent, and measures which merely tighten up the machinery of capitalist administration at the expense of the workers.

We have exposed in these columns times without number the fraudulent character of the reforms advocated by "progressives" of all shades, from the old-age pensioners and insurance schemes of Liberals to the nationalisation projects of the "left wing," but we still find trustful souls who believe in the possibility of getting "something now." These good people are simply in a fog. They do not realise that "now" the workers are politically powerless and will remain so until they organise as a class for the establishment of Socialism. To expect "something now" is to expect charity from the master-class. It is to fly in the face of history, which shows that such concessions as conditions have allowed the workers to wring from the masters in the past lose their value with the progress of industry. The victories of Trade Unions in their early days, resulting in shorter hours and higher wages, have been neutralised by the improvement in machinery and productive methods, speeding-up, intenser exploitation and more unemployment.

Not only is this the case, but even the ability of Trade Unions to obtain such con-



cessions grows manifestly less with the increased concentration and international organisation of capital. Yet in spite of this we find individuals, in the name of "Communism," encouraging the workers to "demand," from the capitalist state, £4 per week and a 44-hour slavery!

If economic laws *could* be legislated out of existence, if capitalism *could* be made to serve the interests of the workers, then there would, indeed, be no case for Socialism. It would long ago have perished, a sterile Utopia. The work of Marx, ignored by the "Communists" who pay him lip-homage, was to emphasise the inability of governments to work miracles. Relying firmly upon political action, he stressed the need for understanding the conditions and essential limitations of that action. It is characteristic of the inverted logic of the "Communist" and "minority movers" that in one breath they avow their contempt for Parliamentary procedure, and in the next call upon the workers to send in petitions—to the House of Commons!

The Socialist Party is out to obtain all that can be obtained for the workers under capitalism. We know sufficient of capitalism, however, to realise that the only way to obtain the smallest advantage is to oppose the enemy, both on the economic and political fields. We do not propose to give our support in exchange for a mere promise—and the more the enemy concedes the harder we shall hammer at his fortress, i.e., working-class ignorance, apathy and disunity. The political supremacy of the workers will only be achieved by organisation for an object which will unite, inspire, and enlighten them. That object is Socialism—our object.

Other parties may tell you fellow-workers that it is their object also—"ultimately"; but you will, if careful, notice that they do not make it a plank in their election addresses. They cannot find room for it. They have too many requests to make of the master-class to propose to abolish them.

Fellow-workers, we apologise to no one for our existence as a party. We have watched for years the baffled efforts and disappointed hopes of sections of our class, acting in ignorance of important factors in their problems. It is our mission to make those factors clear, and we invite you to study our literature, come to our meetings, ask us your questions, confident that when you understand our case you will join us.

## POPULATION AND POVERTY.

A debate took place recently in South London between an alleged Communist and a champion of the New Generation League on the question, "Is Birth Control Necessary for the Abolition of Poverty?" This is not a report thereof, but an attempt to put before our readers the Socialist view of the question raised.

The speaker in the affirmative was decidedly modest in his claims. He did not assert that Birth Control *would* abolish poverty, or even ameliorate it, but simply that poverty could not be abolished without it. He advanced, of course, the time-worn dogma that population tends to press upon means of subsistence, no matter what the latter may be, and left his audience to conclude that poverty was a result of this pressure and, therefore, short of artificial control of births, unavoidable. He further attached great importance to the facts that Marx formed his opinions prior to the publication of Darwin's "Origin of Species" (based upon Malthus) and was, moreover, a townsman ignorant of agriculture and its limited possibilities.

Let us examine these claims. In the first place poverty is not merely a relative term, it is a description of the condition of a particular class in society, namely, the working class, i.e., the class which produces the antithesis of poverty, which is wealth. This wealth is enjoyed by a comparatively small section of the community, namely, the capitalist, or master, class, who *own the material means* by which the workers produce it. In this ownership is to be found the cause of their social position and not in the size of their families. Broadly speaking, it is true that the workers have more numerous progeny than their masters, but it is equally true that no amount of abstinence from the function of pro-creation will make a man a millionaire. Something more is necessary, i.e., the exploitation of social labour.

This fact is ignored by the Malthusian. He talks imposingly about "the struggle for existence" (a term which he never accurately defines), but omits to mention that before the struggle for *wealth* can commence, it has to be produced by some measure of co-operation. Every historical form of society has involved the co-operative efforts of the labourers as an element in its economic basis. The ancient empires, founded on chattel-slavery, the feudal king-

doms of the middle ages resting on serfdom, as well as the capitalist régime of to-day based upon wage-labour, could not conceivably have existed if the productivity of the workers' labour had not exceeded their necessary consumption.

The pressure of the workers upon their means of subsistence is thus the product not of "nature" but of society under certain conditions in the course of its development. In other words, the contrast between wealth and poverty is of historical origin and came into existence only when, by dint of labour, mankind had acquired a degree of control over nature's supply of the means of subsistence sufficient to permit of the existence of an idle class.

Under pre-historical conditions, a primitive form of Communism existed. The small, narrow social groups of those days knew no class distinctions. If nature was niggardly, *all* suffered; if generous *all* benefited. Property rights as understood to-day did not exist. Mankind exploited nature as their state of development permitted, with none but the savage beasts to say them nay. The basis of the group was kinship, i.e., descent from a common ancestor. Under Communism men advanced from the lowest depths of savagery to the threshold of civilisation. They discovered fire, invented the bow and arrow, and the arts of smelting and pottery-making, domesticated animals and initiated horticulture. They laid, in fact, the ground-work for all subsequent progress.

Tribal communism, however, broke up with the advance of chattel-slavery, an institution, the origin of which affords an interesting refutation of Malthusianism. In extremely primitive times, groups engaged in warfare among other objects for women to add to the numbers of their tribe; the men they slew. With the increase of the fruits of labour, however, a use was discovered for the male captives of war as well. They became slaves of their conquerors, and the wealth of a Roman patrician was in proportion, not to the smallness of his household, indeed, but, on the contrary, to the numbers of these slaves who constituted its most important element. For their maintenance he was responsible just as the farmer is responsible for his cattle; but the surplus-product of their labour was the source of his wealth, and the same principle has applied under various forms to this day. The wealth

of the feudal lord was in proportion to the number of his tenants, while the modern financial magnate controls huge industrial armies.

On the other hand the avowed birth-controlling peasants of France "enjoy" a standard of life lower than that of the wage-slaves of Britain and America; a fact which is due, not to any niggardliness of nature in France, but to the antiquated methods of exploitation upon which its rulers depend.

The Malthusian claims that this is due to the absence of coal in France. He forgets that if this is true then the *presence* of coal would have led to similar results as in England, i.e., a higher degree of exploitation and unemployment!

It is clear in any case that the progress of industry and, consequently, in the long run the progress of society, depends upon the further development of *social* labour. The restriction of population can at best play but a negative part in this progress, while, pushed to extremes, it can only produce stagnation. Modern industrial development necessitates the existing population with its massing of the workers in highly organised productive centres. As a remedy for poverty, therefore, birth control is a policy of reaction and despair, whatever its value may be from a hygienic point of view.

To recapitulate, present poverty is due to capitalism, i.e., to the monopoly by a diminishing class of the fruits of social effort. It can be abolished so soon as the class which suffers from it realises the cause of it and removes that cause. When the workers organise as a class, seize political power, and convert the means of living into the common property of all, then and then only will class distinctions and their social and economic accompaniments disappear.

The struggle between the capitalists over the surplus wealth wrung from their slaves on the one hand and the struggle between the slaves for jobs on the other are the fruits of immature development. They will vanish when in the struggle between these two classes as a whole, the workers, are victorious. Production will then be carried on in conscious co-operation in order to secure the fullest possible development for every individual.

The limits of productive possibility no one can foresee, and it behoves the workers in their own interests to study existing conditions for the solution of existing problems.



Mathematical calculations with regard to the number of elephants per square yard likely to result from unchecked multiplication may be ingenious and even exciting to an overheated imagination, but they have no bearing upon the problem of poverty. As for Marx, whatever his views on Darwin may have been, he was able to expose Malthus for the plagiarist he was (see footnote 1 to page 345, "Capital," Sonnenschein edition).

E. B.

### PARTY ACTIVITIES.

A well-attended meeting was held at Battersea (Small) Town Hall on Sunday, February 21st. Com. Fitzgerald lectured on "Why We Oppose All Other Political Parties." A large number of questions were asked, followed by much discussion. The stream of anti-political questions were easily and convincingly answered, and Labour Party supporters were supplied with many unpalatable truths about their idols. The collection was £2 14s. 0d.

Another lecture at Battersea (Lower) Town Hall will be given on April 11th, at 7.30.

A very successful public meeting was held at Stratford Town Hall on Sunday, March 14th, to commemorate the Commune of Paris. The large audience listened very attentively to the speakers who told the story of the Commune, its historical causes and its great lessons for the workers of to-day. A collection of £4 8s. 6d. was taken, and a good sale of literature resulted.

### NOW READY.

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## WORKING CLASS "EDUCATION."

### PLEBS LEAGUER PUTS MARX RIGHT

Winifred Horrabin is Honorary Secretary of the Plebs League. She reviewed in the "Sunday Worker" (15 Nov., 1925) "A Worker Looks at Economics," written by Mark Starr, a fellow member of the League. After warning the workers to beware of Capitalist explanations of economic facts and figures she writes:—

"Don't let us expect that when our employers pay us 5s. for 10s. worth of our labour power that their explanation of that odd 5s. is going to be the same as ours."

Now, although it will be news to Mrs. Horrabin, Marx based his explanation of profits on the assumption that employers do pay 10s. for 10s. worth of our labour power. The value of labour-power in the long run is determined by the cost of maintaining the labourer, educating him and so forth. The profit arises from the simple fact that the working class produce a mass of values greater than those they consume. Profit is made by buying labour power at its value—according to Marx, but not according to this "Marxian" educator of the workers.

She may reply that to worry about the theories of Marx is mere pedantry—but if so, why does she pose as a Marxian?

We can understand, even while we reject the view of those who say that there is no time to educate the workers, that action and action alone is what counts. We can equally understand Capitalist propagandists who seek deliberately to mis-educate the victims of Capitalism. But we really cannot understand those who, wanting to overthrow Capitalism, have no time to learn and teach the truth, but time enough and cheek enough to offer as knowledge the bewildering half-truths which satisfy mentally indolent superior persons.

H.

### SHEFFIELD AND DISTRICT.

All those in Sheffield and nearby towns who are interested in the work of the Party are invited to communicate with

**F. GOULDER,**

**214, Attercliffe Common,  
Sheffield.**

# THE SOCIALIST PARTY AND YOU.

Before many weeks have passed we may hope that brighter weather will permit us to begin a new propaganda season. It will permit, but it will not compel. Be the sky never so blue and the sun never so warm, no seeds of Socialism will be scattered unless there are sowers to do the work. Capitalism may prepare the ground in men's minds, but that alone will bring no harvest. The growth of Socialist knowledge requires effort; the effort must be organised and the organisation must have resources.

Knowledge of Socialism we have, and the rudiments of organisation; resources far below even our present needs and a measure of effort quite inadequate to the task we have in hand.

### HOW DO WE STAND?

We have a few hundred members, upwards of 5,000 readers of the "Socialist Standard," some 40,000 copies of the three pamphlets advertised in this issue; we hold a certain number of indoor and outdoor meetings and doubtless we all find time and opportunity to impress our point of view on our acquaintances. These activities, with the difficulties, by no means few or negligible, which attend publishing our Journal and finding the necessary money, absorb all of our available energies. And with this "Light Brigade" we propose to conquer the world—not unnaturally a subject of mirth for the enemy!

Why is our membership numbered in hundreds instead of thousands? Why not fifty thousand readers, and why not a weekly paper? Why not 30 pamphlets and meetings too numerous to mention? These things, you will say, are at the moment pleasant to dream about but not practicable propositions. True, but there are other developments by no means beyond our range, only waiting for just that little extra effort. Another 1,000 copies of the "S.S." sold and it would more than pay for itself; double its circulation and we could reduce the price to 1d.; make a hole quickly in those 40,000 pamphlets and we can get on with printing some more; give us a little more financial support and we could offer much needed assistance to scattered provincial members anxious to make us known and organise new branches.

### WHY DON'T YOU GIVE US A HAND?

These words are addressed in a sense especially to those numerous old readers and sympathisers of long standing who have never yet felt the urgency of joining actively in our work. Many of them would justify standing aside, perhaps, with the remark that they would willingly join in if they could see some signs of activity; if only the S.P.G.B. would be more lively and do something. To which we can only reply that with their help, perhaps, we might, and in any event if they would but come inside they would better realise how great are the difficulties to be overcome before we can do even what little we succeed in doing now.

We are a working class organisation and our funds are accordingly very strictly limited. The whole of the work of the organisation has so far depended entirely on the voluntary unpaid services of our members. This must, of course, remain generally true, however our activities may grow, but there are many things which can be done so much better, and others which can only be done at all by full time paid officials. We cannot, for instance, have organisers at work in the provinces until we can afford the expense, and only those who have tried know that there is a soon-reached physical limit to the spare time work that can be performed after our employers have had their eight hours of the best that is in us. Much as we should like to attain a level of efficiency in internal administration equal to that of the best business concerns, it is a sheer impossibility to do so with the necessarily irregular and haphazard efforts on which we must rely.

If, then, you have in the past been discouraged by our little show of activity, you will realise that we carry on under difficulties. We are, in fact, in the position of having to trust to the excellence of our wares. We cannot compete in advertising and service with the numerous purveyors of political shoddy who are our competitors.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO.

If, then, you already understand and accept our principles, why not apply for membership? To do so will give encouragement to us; it will keep you in touch with the internal work of the party, show



you our difficulties and open up forms of activity you had not considered. You can, perhaps, find ways of co-operating with other members, at present isolated and inactive like yourself. All who can afford it can give us welcome financial aid.

Practically everyone can make a point of pushing the sale of the "S.S." and our pamphlets. You can and should perfect yourself as a speaker or as a writer, for in both directions we are sadly handicapped. You can send us your criticisms of the matter in our publications and of the manner of its presentation. If you dislike what we say or how we say it we can promise to consider your points and endeavour to meet them so far as our limited powers permit. Above all, if you have difficulties or want particular subjects dealt with and explained, do not hesitate to write and tell us. Without some such guide it is difficult indeed to know to what extent we are making the best use of our limited resources.

Never before have external conditions been so favourable! never have the workers been more ready to listen to and examine the Socialist case, but with this decline of hostility has come a corresponding disinclination to give enthusiastic support, due, no doubt, to the disappointment born of repeated disillusionment suffered at the hands of professional politicians of the old school, or at the hands of the new and numerous brood who distort and bring into disrepute the Principles of Socialism. Remember that you and we are of the working class and we cannot, if we would, wash our hands of working class troubles. Their problems are also yours and ours, if they sink further into the mire so do we and you. If we cannot win the workers for Socialism, they will be retained for the Capitalist system and you will share the suffering that will ensue.

Just think it over and consider whether it should not be your duty and privilege to have a hand in this work. H.

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## THE SECRET OF "HIGH" WAGES.

Quite a number of people appear to have discovered America, including the "Daily Mail" and Mr. Oswald Mosley. "Why is it," they ask, "that the American workman is paid at a higher rate than the Englishman, yet his employers make considerable profits?" The "Daily Mail" apparently considers the subject interesting enough to dispatch a special commission of trade unionists to investigate; while Mr. Oswald Mosley has already returned with the information that better machinery is the secret. This was pointed out in the "Socialist Standard" some fifteen or sixteen years ago by our contributor A. E. J.; in fact, an acquaintance with Marxian economics would predispose one to draw that conclusion in advance of the actual evidence.

What is not pointed out, however, by these discoverers is the fact that, in spite of his higher wages, the American worker is relatively in a worse position than his British compeer. This was illustrated by the existence of six million unemployed in the U.S.A. less than five years ago. It is illustrated by such facts as are described on page 24 of our new pamphlet on "Socialism." The mode of organisation in American bread factories is to divide the plant into two sets of machinery operated by two gangs of men who are pitted against one another in the endeavour to obtain the maximum speed. The net result is that the American workers are faced with greater insecurity as a reward for greater productivity while the master class of America enjoys the fruits of their labour on a scale which arouses the envy of their British competitors.

The facts of American production give the lie to the oft repeated claim that lower wages in Britain will bring prosperity to all; but, correctly understood, they also illustrate the futility of the propaganda of the "Daily Herald" and the Labour leaders on behalf of American methods. These gentry, of course, pretend that higher wages are the solution of the unemployed problem through the restoration of the home markets; five seconds' reflection, however, will reveal the absurdity of this argument.

The master class do not control production simply to supply the markets; they do not employ workers to produce goods merely

in order to sell them again. They do these things in order to obtain a profit! Consequently, they will adopt a policy of higher wages only when they can see the possibility of more profits arising as a consequence. The "Herald" and its satellites are fond of arguing as though the American employers paid higher wages in order to avoid slumps; but, as pointed out in our pamphlet, the higher wage-rate of America is the result of the fact that capitalism there commenced with the workers occupying a more favourable social position than they did in Europe. Their ability to settle on the land as independent proprietors resulted in a scarcity of labour-power in the industrial centres. Hence the more rapid strides which the machine has made in that country.

The most important point to bear in mind, however, is that wherever capitalism exists, no matter what standard of life the workers possess, that standard tends to fall in relation to that of the master class. In other words, the share of the workers in the total product of their labour grows smaller with every advance in the powers of production, whether it be the result of improved machinery, better organisation, speeding up, technical education, or the like. According to Prof. Hansen, of Minnesota University: "From 1897 to 1915 real wages were falling in spite of an enormous increase in national production." (American Economic Review, March, 1925.)

Increased production, either with high wages or without, leads to no improvement of the working-class position; on the contrary, every boom leads inevitably to the slump. In its issue of March 20th, the "Daily Herald" insults the intelligence by comparing Colonel Willey's observations upon slumps and waste with the analysis presented in "Capital," and expresses its gratitude for the fatuous suggestion that the elimination of waste means "less labour for the workers, more recreation and no attack on wages." If Colonel Willey means by "less labour," an increase in the unemployed, if by "recreation," he means promenading the streets asking for work or maintenance, and if he means that the unemployed have no wages to be attacked, then, we may, of course, agree with him; but it cannot be too often emphasised that all economy under the existing system benefits the masters at the expense of the workers.

The "Rooster" thus demonstrates once more the fact that capitalist economics dominate its outlook. It wishes to teach our masters how to run their own system. As an agent of confusion it is a worthy rival of its Tory competitors.

E. B.

### STATE SOCIALISM!

"Out of a civil service of 300,000 people, 225,000 get less than £4 a week, inclusive of bonus, 150,000 get less than £3 a week, inclusive of bonus, and scores of thousands get less than £2 a week inclusive."—The Secretary of The Civil Service Association ("The Star," Feb. 17).

### THE USE OF RELIGION.

"In societies such as ours, in which the inequality of fortune presents a striking contrast besides our political equality, the religious sentiment is the best means of reconciling and uniting together the rich and the poor. . . . It teaches the poor man to be patient and honest amid all temptations, to be confident of a brighter future here below, and to look beyond the world to the hope of a good reward in another and a higher sphere of existence."—M. Chevalier.

### KNOWLEDGE.

The following Books can be obtained from Head Office:—

Anarchism and Socialism. Plechanoff. 3/6, paper 1/2.

Civil War in France. Marx 2/9.

Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844. Engels. 5/-.

Critique of Political Economy. Marx. 6/6.

18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon. Marx. 3/6.

Evolution of Property. Lafargue. 3/6, limp 1/6.

Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State. Engels. 3/6.

Poverty of Philosophy. Marx. 6/6.

Revolution and Counter-Revolution. Marx. 3/6, limp 1/6.

Social and Philosophical Studies. Lafargue. 3/6.

Socialism: Utopian and Scientific. Engels. 3/6, limp 1/6.

Postage extra.

### S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS

LONDON DISTRICT.

**Sundays:** Finsbury Park, 3 p.m.  
Clapham Common, 3 p.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 7.30 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m.

**Mondays:** Clerkenwell, Garsault Place, 8 p.m.  
Islington, Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.

**Thursdays:** Hackney, Queens Road, Dalston, 8 p.m.

**Fridays:** Clerkenwell, Garsault Place, 8 p.m.

**Fridays:** West Ham, Water Lane, Stratford, 7.30 p.m.  
Leyton, James Lane, nr. Leyton Stn., 7.30 p.m.



**SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road. Discussion last Thursday in month. Open to all.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Communications to E. Jesper, 74, Murdoch-rd., Birmingham. Branch meets A.E.U. Institute, Spiceal-st., every Saturday.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions every Wednesday at 8.45 p.m.—all invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to A. Jacobs, Sec., 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at 141 Bow-rd.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Andrew Porter, 12a, Kings-rd., Portobello.

**GLASGOW.**—Communications to Sec., J. Higgins, 816, Rutherglen-rd., Oatlands, Glasgow.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Saturdays, 7 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare Street, Hackney. Discussions after Branch Business. Communications to Secretary at above address.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., W. Rowney, 43, Paddock St., Hanley, Staffs. Open to all.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to W. Baker, 85 Alma-st., Kentish Town, N.W.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to Sec., 8, Cheltenham rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Communications to Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Sec., A. Yeomans, 15, University-rd., Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 17, Antil-road, Broad Lane, Tottenham, N.17. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce-grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to S. E. Williams, 85, Park-road, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Thursdays at 8.30 p.m. No. 1 Room, Labour Club, Clarendon Road.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



THE  
**Socialist Standard**  
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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## WILL CO-PARTNERSHIP END THE CLASS WAR?

Readers of that scintillating specimen of Liberal originality can hardly have failed to notice the recent propaganda of the "Westminster Gazette" in favour of co-partnership between Capital and Labour. The plea is advanced that, in order to meet "world competition," masters and men must fraternise with a view to greater production, the incentive for the men being "a share in the profits." Sir A. Mond, in fact, goes as far as to declare that the proposal is the only practicable alternative to Socialism. As such, let us examine it.

In the first place it is worth noticing that "world competition" appears to take two forms. There is that of America with its "high wages" and highly developed machinery on the one hand and that of the Continent with its longer hours and lower wages on the other. The Liberal organ appears to favour the Americanisation, rather than the Europeanisation, of British industry; but it sheds no light upon the rather ticklish problem of beating the Americans at their own game and avoiding an increase in the unemployed at the same time.

In Germany several years of "increased production" have resulted in raising an industrial reserve army of something like two millions and the reason is not far to seek. Under the existing social order, wealth is produced, neither for use nor for mere production's sake, but for *profit*. Profit forms the sole motive for the investment of capital and when increased production is spoken of it is the increased production of profit that is implied. Consequently the practicability of any scheme for increasing production depends upon whether it will simultaneously add to the remuneration of capital. No capitalist concern is going de-

liberately to adopt a scheme which will involve the swallowing up of the increased product by higher wages. To do so would be to act in defiance of the reason for its own existence.

Nor is the capitalist likely to enlarge the scope of production merely for the sake of an equal division of the increased product. It is evident that he can only oust his rivals by cheapening his product and this involves an alteration in the relationship between what Marx calls the constant and the variable elements in the composition of capital; in other words, it involves the progressive displacement of the worker by the machine. The machine makes it possible to pay those workers retained a higher wage than formerly, while making a still greater profit as a result of larger turnover with cheaper commodities. What do the workers gain from this? Relatively to the share of capital in the product of their labour, *their* share has fallen, while the higher standard of wages merely compensates (and that not completely) for the added strain of machine production plus the insecurity of their jobs.

These being the general conditions for increased production, what chance has co-partnership of removing the antagonism between capital and labour? As profit can only arise from the difference between what the workers produce and what is returned to them to consume, it is obvious that, however much in detail such schemes may differ, they all have this in common.

They consist simply in a more or less elaborate piece of camouflage. Part of the workers' wages are labelled "share of profits." The illusion is thus created that the workers have an interest in their own exploitation, i.e., in increasing profits as opposed to wages. In the eyes of workers



so deceived, strikes become senseless and trades unions are justified only as means of preserving discipline and good feeling towards the boss.

Several employers, who have profited remarkably well from this method of bluffing their slaves, are loud in its praise and are not slow to proclaim it as the road to the New Jerusalem. A little reflection, however, will show that, even if the whole field of industry could be covered by such schemes, the antagonism of interests would by no means have been abolished. The expression of that antagonism would merely change its form. The complete suppression of strikes would amount to no more than the suppression of a symptom, the cause of which would find an outlet in some other symptom far more serious to capitalism. "Industrial peace" can be bought only with the swelling of the unemployed army to hitherto unheard of dimensions, only by the substitution of doles for wages.

There is little likelihood, however, of any widespread adoption of the co-partnership principle in its fully developed form. While it may be suitable in certain trades such as the production of soap and cocoa while the demand for labour-power is comparatively stable, it is obviously unsuitable in industries where the rapid and considerable alterations in market conditions render the lock-out as indispensable to the masters as the strike is to the workers. The instability inseparable from competition upsets all schemes based upon the attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable.

As long ago as the middle of last century Marx in the "Communist Manifesto" exposed the hollowness of bourgeois reforms. Said he (p. 27) "The bourgeois want all the advantages of modern social conditions without the struggles and dangers necessarily resulting therefrom. They desire the existing state of society minus its revolutionary and disintegrating elements. They wish for a bourgeoisie without a proletariat. The bourgeoisie naturally conceives the world in which it is supreme to be the best . . . and but requires in reality that the proletariat should remain within the bounds of existing society but should cast aside all its hateful ideas concerning the bourgeoisie."

How admirably the above extract hits off the attitude of the capitalist advocates of co-partnership and kindred suggestions! According to the "Westminster Gazette" the initiative must remain with capital. In

other words capital must determine the conditions upon which the workers are to be admitted to "partnership." All that is necessary for the workers to do is to shed their suspicions of the benevolent intentions of their masters. What a comfortable world it would be for those masters if only the workers would be content with slavery, if only they would accept capitalism as final. Slowly but surely, however, the class-war moves into its decisive phases. Mentally bankrupt, the master-class apprehend more clearly the coming social revolution.

E.B.

### HOW MANY LUMPS?

#### THE CHARWOMAN'S CHARTER!

We hope you read "Newsman." Oh! he's delightful. Under the heading "London Calling" you will find each day in the "Daily News" a column of the most brilliant banality known to us. So genteel! So awfully nice! In the best of taste, always. And he knows all the best people, knows them intimately. Not a day passes but quite casual mention is made of "my friend Lord Mugsborough," or "I met my old friend Sir Simon Slush at the Blitz," or some similar happening. Undoubtedly he is—how do you term it?—well-connected. He has views, too. Oh yes! In spite of close association with the azure blooded, and the monied people, he is a pure democrat, an out and out Liberal. He—well, here is a sample from the "Daily News" of March 20th. The title is his, too:—

#### A FIGHTING FAITH.

At the luncheon which followed the laying of the commemoration stones at the new "Daily News" and "Star" building more than one reference was made to the famous phrase about "the charwoman's sugar" in Mr. O'Connor's confession of faith, which was the leading article in the first issue of the "Star" in 1888.

The actual phrase—often misquoted—is as follows:—

"The policy will appear to us worthy of everlasting thanks, and of ineffaceable glory, that does no more than enable the charwoman to put two pieces of sugar in her cup of tea instead of one; and that adds one farthing a day to the wage of the seamstress or the labourer."

That could not be bettered as an expression of fighting Radicalism, and it has remained as an inspiration to Radicals for 38 years.

Lord Oxford, by the way, sent Mr. O'Connor his congratulations on his "marvellous and supremely delightful speech" at this luncheon.

How's that? A fighting faith! How apt. How profoundly stirring. We agree, as an

expression of fighting Radicalism, that could not be bettered. It has the advantage of being equally suitable as a battle cry for white mice. We rejoice to learn that Radicals have derived 38 years of inspiration from it. What grandeur in that thought. And the dear old charwoman. Was she at the luncheon, and did she have two lumps of sugar in her tea? Alas, we are not told. But how her old heart must throb, when she looks back 38 years to that bleak time when her cup of tea only boasted one lump of sugar. How her eyes must dim with tears of gratitude when after 38 years of Radical fighting, she drops a second lump into her cup. Really, it makes a lump come in one's throat merely to imagine this affecting scene. And doubtless, the dear old lady after 38 years of Radical progress will be turning her thoughts to another of their gifts—the Lump. W.T.H.

#### A LABOUR M.P. CRITICISES OUR POSITION.

We have received an article criticising "Socialism and Materialism" (which appeared in the April issue) from Mr. Fred Montague, Labour M.P. for Islington. This will appear in the next issue together with our reply.

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#### LOCARNO AND FRED KARNO.

Of course we shall scoff; that is expected of us. What else can one do with shams and hypocrisies? Besides, it is refreshing. It is a mistake to analyse laboriously and logically every exhibition of human folly. So we shall just scoff. Has it not been said that all enemies of the League of Nations will rejoice at its discomfiture. We are not among its enemies. One does not hate what amuses. But who could take seriously an aggregation of predatory rapacity calling itself a League of Nations? What a sight for the Gods! What a spectacle for men! Imagine these rulers of ours, with centuries of bloodshed and massacre behind them, striding through their latest hecatomb, trampling over the bones of their latest twenty-million victims, making for the quiet little town of Locarno. Why did they choose Locarno? Possibly because there, their ears were not deafened with the hammering in the shipyards, where the Labour Party's six cruisers were nearing completion. Possibly to be out of earshot of the rumbling of tanks, the thunder of guns, and the clatter of troops engaged in the Autumn Manœuvres, busily getting ready for the next difference of opinion. Possibly so that their deliberations would not be disturbed by the drone of aeroplanes practising the bombing of cities; or so that they would be free from the importunities of inventors, with the latest and most excruciating form of poisonous gas. Possibly because the other Continental holiday resorts were rather crowded, or perhaps with an eye to the appropriate, because Locarno reminded them of Fred Karno, England's one-time prize comedian. But anyhow, they got there. There to do what? There presumably, to lay the foundations of a secure and permanent peace. How nice! How laudable! Yes! and they were successful. Oh yes! Mr. Austen Chamberlain ordered a new "bowler." They told him he would be known as Sir Austen instead of Mr. Austen in future. Church bells were jangled, big drums were thumped, armament manufacturers shot themselves, Admirals jumped overboard and Generals went on the Labour Exchange. So you will see there is some sadness in all jollification. As usual, the Admirals and Generals had been too precipitate. There was a further Conference to come. The Locarno spirit was to be supplemented by the Geneva spirit. The Locarno Conference had been



marred by the absence of the dear friends with whom Sir Austen, when but a plain Mister, had drained a "loving-cup." Geneva was to remedy that. The "loving-cup" was to be furnished with additional handles, that all who would, might drink to everlasting peace and amity. So deeply did these delegates of free peoples realise their duty to their respective democracies, that it was thought advisable to hold their meetings in secret. We, with our narrow, restricted views on what constitutes democracy, look upon secrecy with suspicion, but there; are we not impossibilists?

However, the Harmony Kings disappeared behind their curtain, and the world hoped for the best. Alas! Alack the day! Sounds utterly unlike peace came through the veil. Groans and maledictions rent the dove-cot within, and the plain-work-a-day world outside was grieved to hear unmistakable sounds of strife proceeding from the Temple of Peace. What was wrong? Nobody knows. The Press has released a farrago of jargon upon us, on the Scandal of Geneva; the Fiasco of Geneva; the Menace of Geneva, and so on, all about as useful as the Gin of Geneva. Questions of permanent and semi-permanent seats, Germany's entry and Brazil's veto, Spain's claims and Sweden's attitude, have been so bandied about that it is to be feared the average person has turned to the football results with a certain feeling of relief.

We will say it as modestly as we can—we thought as much. It is always a safe remark—after the event. Do not misunderstand us; we are not cynical. The horrors of another war like the last, are such as would justify almost any attempt to prevent it. It is the workers who have to suffer; we know that well enough. But to expect capitalism to abolish war, is like hoping for tigers to turn vegetarian. "It is their nature to" conquer and prey.

How profoundly pathetic it is to contemplate the thousands of well-meaning, earnest people pinning their hopes upon this phantasm, this illusion, this dream of the muddle-headed, the League of Nations. These are hard words. Many will read them with pain. We hope they will add to that, patience. For listen:

Here we have a system based upon robbery. You don't agree! You don't like the word "robbery"! That is simply because custom has blinded you to realities. Robbery is taking something from another

without an equivalent. Even when the robbed is willing but is the victim of a trick, it is called robbery, even by capitalist law. The land was taken from the people by simple robbery. The wealth is taken from them to-day by a little more intricate robbery, but it is robbery just the same. They may tacitly agree with the robbery, but that is because they are unaware of the process. They are the victims of a trick. They are made to believe they are paid for what they do. They believe their wages are an equivalent to their work. It is not so. In simple language, we say that the whole working class produce each week a huge cake of wealth. Out of this cake, a slice is cut sufficient to keep the workers going for a further week. The difference between the slice and the cake is the extent of their robbery. Now in any given country, the size of this cake is becoming a source of embarrassment to its owners. Time was when they could exchange what they did not want at home, for some different kind of cake from other countries. But latterly the other countries have established capitalist bakeries of their own, and having exchanged portions amongst themselves until they are full up and running over, they each find they have large portions left. Here is a quandary. If they wait until ordinary usage has consumed the cake, two or three weeks may elapse. It is useless making cake with so much on hand, the masters say, so the working class must cease working until there is again a demand for cake. But the working class can only live by making cake. What is to be done? Experience has brought many expedients. First there is the device of colonies, and then that of trading with undeveloped races. These serve for a time, but obviously, when both the colonies and the backward countries proceed to produce cake for themselves, and later experience the same embarrassment in disposing of the surplus, the process becomes an urgent problem. Stoppages of the working class become more frequent and more prolonged. Portions of cake are crumbled off and grudgingly distributed under the various names of charity, Poor Law, insurance benefit, etc. It is easy to see that without such doles, the working class would not starve quietly in the midst of an abundance, kept under lock and key.

And then there are the foreign markets. What a scramble there has been for these. Here the robbery has been open, crude, and

undisguised. The so-called backward races have been invaded, their lands stolen, themselves massacred, the remnants enslaved. To what end? Primarily that their lands might furnish cheap ingredients for the cake, and next that they might become customers for the finished cake. It is in this struggle for markets, as it is called, that we find the genesis of modern capitalist wars. The first nation to reach the colonising, market hunting stage, of capitalist development was England. Each nation that has reached the stage where colonies and foreign markets were a necessity of further expansion, has found England first and later competitors blocking the way. Hence jealousy, competition, friction, warfare, bloodshed. Every struggle, even the last so-called war for democracy, has been followed by a re-apportionment of the earth's surface. Now, without being by any means exhaustive, sufficient has been said to prove beyond reasonable doubt, that war is the logical outcome of capitalism. But capitalism is being compelled to realise that warfare is subject to the same laws of growth as all human institutions. Beyond a certain point its further expansion is at the expense of the rest of the organism. Modern powers of destruction tend ever more and more to involve victors and vanquished in a common doom. The day is quite near when one solitary aeroplane will be able to wipe out a town. Capitalism has endowed a giant with enormous strength, but like Samson in the Temple, the same act that destroys his enemies destroys himself. So capitalism pauses. Capitalists are human, like the rest of us; death is death whether one wears a silk hat or a cloth cap. So capitalism pauses. It confers. It recognises that expansion is the law of its being. But it recognises that expansion means war; and that war means destruction; and that destruction may be universal. Here is a dilemma. The League of Nations is an attempt to find a solution. We wish them luck. Our great hope is that the form of their disillusionment may not take the shape of another war, but that they will realise that the cause of war is capitalism, and that the way to abolish war is to abolish the cause. We sadly fear that as so many supporters of the League are also ardent supporters of capitalism, they will take the bloodier road. The true League of Nations will be an International Socialist Party. Its aim will be to make the whole earth a com-

mon human possession, not a congeries of railed off portions, defended one from the other by bayonets and poison gas. Its beginning is here, here in Great Britain. The Socialist Party simply awaits your help and membership before joining with similar parties in all parts of the world, to achieve the release of mankind from the curse of toil, slavery, poverty, massacre and war. Is not the object a worthy one? Is not that worth a little sacrifice and effort? Then why wait, why drift, why let the years go by? Socialism is possible now, to-day. Make it a certainty by joining the Socialist Party to-day.

W.T.H.

## THE PLEBS LEAGUER & MARX.

### A CONFESSION FROM WINIFRED HORRABIN.

We have received the following letter from the Honorary Secretary of the Plebs League referring to our criticism in the April "Socialist Standard":—

The Editor,

"The Socialist Standard."

April 11th, 1926.

Dear Comrade,

"The Socialist Standard," ever up to date, criticises in its April issue a review of mine that appeared in the "Sunday Worker" in November of last year and in criticising what I wrote launches a bitter personal attack on me, calling me "a mentally indolent superior person," finishing up by asking me why I "pose as a Marxian."

May I be allowed to answer?

First of all. I accept the correction with gratitude and humility. I may be superior, I hope not in the sense meant by your critic, but I certainly hope that I am sporting enough to acknowledge an error when I have made one, and in accepting the correction may I say that it would have lost none of its forcefulness if it had been more polite. After all, if a person is right and has knowledge on their side and insight to see the errors of others, then that person should be calm and could afford to be kind.

I am even willing to abase myself still further and to admit that many of the details of the economic theories of Marx are not clearly understood by me, hence my error, then why do I pose as a Marxian?

Because the materialist conception of history seems to me to be a scientific and true explanation of the events of history, and because I believe that emancipation can only



come through a realisation of the class struggle.

After all, the main point I wished to make in the incriminating sentence quoted by you, was that the capitalist's explanation of anything and the worker's explanation were not the same thing. I can't help feeling that a criticism of the book (or even a word of praise for it) would have been more to the point than a tirade about me.

I am not ashamed to say that I was a human being before I accepted the Marxian theory of society and that unfortunately I am prone to error. It must be nice to feel one is always correct.

Yours fraternally,

WINIFRED HORRABIN.

### OUR COMMENT.

The statement criticised by us appeared in the "Sunday Worker" and was as follows:—

"Don't let us expect that when our employers pay us 5s. for 10s. worth of our labour power that their explanation of that odd 5s. is going to be the same as ours."

After showing the glaring error here and contrasting it with Marx's teaching, we penned the following comment:—

"She may reply that to worry about the theories of Marx is mere pedantry—but if so, why does she pose as a Marxian?"

"We can understand, even while we reject the view of those who say that there is no time to educate the workers, that action and action alone is what counts. We can equally understand Capitalist propagandists who seek deliberately to mis-educate the victims of Capitalism. But we really cannot understand those who, wanting to overthrow Capitalism, have no time to learn and teach the truth, but time enough and cheek enough to offer as knowledge the bewildering half-truths which satisfy mentally indolent superior persons."

We note that Miss Horrabin accepts our correction with gratitude. We did not ask her why she posed as a Marxian. As readers will see, that question hinged on the possibility of a reply ridiculing Marx.

Our criticism is sound; and it is indolent for a secretary of a Labour College organisation to offer her readers such complete ignorance of Marx's economic teaching. The fact that profit is made by buying labour power at its value is a fundamental and

essential point in Marxian economics, and it should be known by those who set out to teach economics.

We learn that Winifred Horrabin was a human being before she accepted the Marxian theory of society. We accept her statement. Her plea that being human she is liable to error is a platitude that does not excuse ignorance of one of Marx's most fundamental economic teachings. And in defining herself as a Marxian she states that she does so because she accepts Marx's theory of society and the class struggle. Thus she avoids the question of Marx's economics altogether, although she is prepared to write in the "Sunday Worker" warning the workers of capitalist economics. It is nice; and, after all, Winifred is human!—ED. COM.

### THE HUMANITARIANS.

#### A CRITICISM OF OUR POSITION.

COMRADES,

I always read the "Socialist Standard" with interest and profit, and if I am troubling you in writing, it is because the article "Socialism and the Humanitarians" seemed to me to be unworthy and just a little bit mean. The general sentiment of the article, while admitting the cruelties perpetrated upon animals, appeared to censure any organised effort to improve their lot while OUR wrongs remained unredressed. This attitude is probably due largely to a Christian upbringing. It seems to me mean because for every ounce of effort that is expended on behalf of animals, a ton goes on man, and the latter the strongest of all—and then to begrudge that ounce! Why, if man would only exert himself ever so little and rid himself of that habit of mind characteristic of inferiors on the doorstep, he could shake off his tyrants and exploiters very soon. Is it within the power of any animal to do the same? When I read instances of the miner ill-using the pit pony, the carter his horse, the fashionable lady and gentleman following the hounds, and the "scientist" probing into the nerve machinery of a dog, I think "poor devils!" for I know they have no union and no appeal. It seems to me that it is not so much thousand pound cheques that are necessary to look after the poor working-man, but a determination to unload a little

of his ignorance and take a different cargo on board. I imagine you would do the gentleman much more good by mixing up a few kicks with the tears, not spitefully administered, but educationally.

Advise occasionally, in your interesting articles, the heroes of Capitalism's bloody quarrels that a little of his highly developed sense of justice and decency abroad might be of some service at home, that to be apathetic and indifferent amidst squalor and poverty for wives and children as well as himself, is something to be profoundly ashamed of, and that it is high time he took a hand himself in working out his own salvation. Dilute sympathy with a few bricks. Remind him that it is not lords and dukes, earls and admirals, that keep him down, but rather himself, and that the heredity and environment that explains him, and too often excuses him, does precisely the same for the other fellows. It is impossible for animals by their own efforts to escape or throw off the cruelty served out to them, so that a helping hand from any quarter, and in much more generous measure, is worthy and commendable and necessary.

Yours fraternally,

V. WILSON.

Manchester.

### REPLY.

So because we put babies before baalams, and men before mutton—we're mean. The result, we are informed, of a Christian upbringing. And we thought we had got it out of our system. Which just shows you, doesn't it?

No, friend. We like criticism, and plenty of it, but—read the article again. There is none who hates cruelty as we do. We said: "Surely we are not going to crab any attempt, however feeble, at abolishing avoidable cruelty! Perish the thought. . . . But we do believe in first things first. We do insist on a sense of proportion."

To amplify still further: it seems to us, shall we say—incongruous, for men who have so recently waded in human blood up to their knees, to discover springs of pity for slaughtered sheep. It seems to us not altogether fitting that those who viewed the massacre of men, women and children for four and a half years with a certain amount of composure, should now turn their atten-

tion to the death agonies of the meat they eat. It may be mean, but we cannot help thinking the reference to pain-poisoned meat may have considerable weight with them. We need not spend much time on the question, but it all boils down to a sense of proportion. What about the cruelty of sealing, of whaling, of fur trapping, of plumage robbing, of even fishing? Many excellent people spend their lives and energies in fighting one or other particular little evil, that they, as it were, adopt. We don't. We retain a sense of the shortness of our individual lives, and the magnitude of our common task. And we concentrate on the big issue—the slavery of our class. So when we see slave-owners preaching pity, and butchers decrying bloodshed—well, we are just ironical, that's all. It may be mean, but we think generosity would be lost on them.

Ed. Com.

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**The Socialist Standard,**

MAY,



1926

**THE FALLACIES  
OF OPPORTUNISM.**

Opportunism has been the grave of many a movement that commenced blessed with the brightest hopes. It has an old and disastrous history in the annals of the working class, and yet it flourishes still, alluring with bright but treacherous promises myriads of workers whose energy and enthusiasm is wasted on fleeting and harmful objects instead of being directed towards the abolition of wage slavery.

Opportunism takes two main roads, one the road that is very, very long but has flowers to be picked by the way; the other the road along which emancipation is to come like a thief in the night—ushered in by a handful of "leaders" behind the backs of the people.

But the wayside flowers wither rapidly, and in like manner the "benefits" that are obtained with much labour and misery wither and become burdens in a very short time. Such are Old Age Pensions, Unemployment Insurance, and the like.

The quick road is full of pitfalls and quagmires, and the travellers along it are brought to ruin by the ignorance of the masses, the duplicity of the leaders, and the power of the masters. Along this road secrecy is one of the watchwords, and one after another secret movements have collapsed through betrayal by some of those taking part.

There was one secret movement, however, nearly 100 years ago, which, from one point of view, worked out in an ideal manner until it came to the final plunge—and then its very secrecy sealed its doom. This was the Barbé insurrection in France in 1839. So well was the secret kept that the main body of those taking part knew neither the leaders nor the plan of action until the day appointed for the rising, and when the leaders turned up nobody recognised them and squabbles and disorganisation resulted.

The opportunist brings his panaceas on to the historical stage then bows and vanishes, only to return again with a fresh one or an old one in a new dress. One by one these panaceas fail to accomplish their purpose and are cast aside.

The question arises, how is it that people are so ready to try false paths when the real remedy for their troubles is so simple and lies ready to hand? There are two principal reasons. First, leadership offers rich prizes to those who covet an easy life, and inflates the vanity of those who seek popular applause. Secondly, when someone offers to do the work and relieve others of the thinking and worrying those others are inclined to support the saviour.

Many of those who profess a desire for a change in the social system and contend that they aim at the same object as we do, yet fall out with us for our methods as being either "unpractical" or "too long."

We urge that the workers must first understand before they act—understand Socialism before any attempt is made to introduce it.

The difference in method leads to a fundamental difference in propaganda. We are all the time engaged in disseminating knowledge of society, in the past and present, among our fellow workers, whilst the opportunists are a great part of the time engaged in disseminating rallying cries, enthusiastic phrases, and heaping abuse upon great men who occasionally play them false.

The results of the opportunists' methods are plain to be seen by those who care to study history. The Co-operative, the Labour Party, the Industrial Unionist Movement, and the Communist Movement, to name only four, are illustrations to the point. The first two have been netted by the Capitalists, the second is dead, and the third is truly "evolutionary"—in a state of constant change!

The "evolution" of the Reformists becomes more interesting as time passes. After years spent impressing upon the workers the necessity of achieving "something now" and not worrying about "the dim and distant future," events seem to be bringing the I.L.P. up with a jerk, if the editorial columns of the "New Leader" are anything to go by.

The Editorial of 12th February, commenting on Snowden's recent speech, runs as follows:—

"Sir John Simon, in his reply, narrowed down our case to 'gas and water Socialism.' To gas and water one may add electricity and even, as Mr. Churchill once proposed, the railways. Such changes, conceived in this spirit, would leave the fabric of Capitalism intact, and even the nationalisation of the land would be no more than the last blow at Feudalism." (Italics ours.) Well! Well! So all the pother was simply about seeing the back seams of feudalism's breeches!

The step by step "evolutionary" method of reaching Socialism has not been a success. Brailsford already made that admission by inference in an article entitled "Socialism in our Generation" in the "New Leader" on January 1st, 1926. The article opens up with the suggestion that the I.L.P. are turning over a new leaf. The opening is so interesting that we cannot refrain from quoting it at length:—

From its earliest days the Socialist movement has drafted its programme in two chapters. In the first it set out demands attainable here and now. In the second it states its ultimate aim. The first chapter varied, as time went on, with the circumstances of each country: sometimes stress was laid on the Parliamentary vote; sometimes on the Eight Hours' Day; or, again, upon reforms in education and housing, or on the needs of the unemployed. This was the "practical" minimum programme. The second chapter was much less modest: it called for nothing less than the ending of the capitalist system, and the public ownership of all the means of production and distribution.

There were good reasons for this division. Every Labour movement grew as it showed tangible results. It had to interest men and women who cared nothing for theories and Utopias. It could not ignore the needs and wrongs of the moment for the sake of the distant transformation. But the method has its evils: when once you have separated the two chapters it is not easy to bring them together again. You draw a line—you print your Chapter II, in bold capital letters, and straightway you have jumped from the humdrum world of Parliamentary debates and general elections into the millennium. As the pioneers passed away and

the second generation of experienced Parliamentarians took their place, the consequences became everywhere apparent. More and more it is the detail of the "practical" programme which absorbs us; the faith in a hazy Utopia survives, but the will to realise it is no longer the driving force. Strangers who watch our movement often liken it to a "religion." The analogy is dangerously true. We have our week-day creed and our Sunday visions. We make ourselves at home in the City of Destruction, and from time to time, with warm hearts and uplifted eyes, we sing of the New Jerusalem.

Surely the above is a damaging admission from the side of the "practical" men if ever there was one! While picking the withering flowers they have forgotten the object they set out to seek. Verily out of their own mouths are they convicted!

If they did but forget the object it were bad enough, but they did worse and it is their leaders who furnish us with the information.

We have already had occasion to comment upon the South African Labour Party, but a little further comment will do no harm, and will illustrate how the "practical" programme of Labour Parties leads them to take action diametrically opposed to the interests of the workers.

The Bill which enforces the "colour bar" in all the industries of South Africa has passed its third reading in the Lower House. It applies to Indians and to Kaffirs, though not to half-castes. It reserves to men of the white races every skilled or semi-skilled trade, and in effect forbids a native to manage a machine. His place henceforth is fixed by law as a mere labourer. He may contrive to educate himself, but the law forbids him to use his sharpened intelligence in the preserves of the white man.

This Bill, one of the most inhuman in the records of the white race, represents the joint policy of the more Conservative Boers and the South African Labour Party. It aims at preserving the wage standards of white labour against native and Indian competition. (New Leader, 12/2/26.)

Such is the way of the opportunist. To the class conscious Revolutionist the workers of the world are one as against the International Capitalist Class, whatever be the race, the colour, or the creed.

The many workers who support the opportunist parties must eventually come to the conclusion that short cuts and "practical" programmes are worthless. If they would emancipate themselves from the present sordid struggle for bread then they must accept and struggle for the Socialist solution to their troubles, which involves the avoidance of both the shambles and the sheepfold.



**THE ENGINEERS' STRIKE. I**

The strike of engineers at the Hoe Printing Works presents problems that merit the serious consideration of working men. The union leaders gave ample illustrations of their anti-working class policy, and the tricky way they forced the national committee to support them should enlighten members of the unions who are willing to pause and ponder a little.

The position ultimately taken up by the unions was the policy advocated by their paid officials and was an obvious policy of defeat.

In the "New Leader" of the 5th March W. M. Citrine, acting secretary of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, had an article on the subject headed "Back the Engineers." The following are two quotations from the article which throw light on the circumstances surrounding the dispute.

It may not be out of place, however, to observe that although the Hoe dispute would appear to furnish the excuse for a lock-out, that incident cannot be dissociated from the negotiations which have dragged their weary way over the past two years. Men who are in receipt of wages entirely out of proportion to their degree of skill, and labourers who receive 37s. per week for 47 hours' work, cannot reasonably be expected to exhibit Job-like patience. The average time rates in the sixteen principal districts are: Fitters and turners, 56s. 6d.; unskilled labourers, 40s. 2d.

The interminable negotiations have created the impression amongst rank-and-file engineering workers that the employers were deliberately operating a policy of procrastination and had no real intention of making any concessions. From time to time during the past two years district applications have been presented for advances which appear to have had substantial justification, but practically everywhere the districts have been met with refusal on the plea that, while national negotiations were proceeding, nothing could be conceded locally. (Italics ours.)

There one can plainly see the advantage to the employers of the Agreement known as The Provisions for Avoiding Disputes, the interminable Government Commissions of Inquiry, and negotiations between Union Committees and Employers' Councils. These are different ways of delaying improvements in workers' conditions and yet they have the whole-hearted support of Trade Union leaders. J. H. Thomas gave public expression to this when he said:—

The trade union leader who wants a strike is not fit for his job... Talk of class warfare can lead nowhere but to hell. (Quoted in No. V. Labour Research booklet from "The Times," 28/4/23.)

Since the end of the war the wages of the

engineers have gone down until they have now reached a figure that will hardly keep "body and soul" together. While the employers see no sign of vigorous opposition from the workers' side there is little likelihood of their making concessions. Under such circumstances how humiliating has been the attitude of the officials the workers appoint and pay with the avowed object of safeguarding their interests. From the posting of the lock-out notices the union leaders have given a public exhibition of their fear of the employers. They have been running to Sir Allan Smith for private conferences and then after each meeting issuing their instructions to the Hoe workers to return to work.

The assertion that the Hoe workers were acting in a way that broke the Agreement can be met from two points of view. The Hoe workers meet it by the contention that their employers had already broken the Agreement themselves. From the other point of view an agreement that allows months and years to pass before a union can take strike action renders the strike (the workers' only real economic weapon in industrial disputes) abortive.

On Sunday, March 7th, a meeting was held at the Elephant and Castle Theatre, to consider the Hoe dispute. This meeting consisted of London District Committees, Branch Secretaries, and Shop Stewards of the unions concerned. The executives desired the meeting to back their policy and instruct the strikers to return to work. The meeting, however, not only refused to do this, but it endorsed the demand of the London Engineering Trades Committee for a wage advance of £1 a week, and failing a settlement that the executives be asked for permission to take a district strike ballot.

They further moved that the executives be asked to take a ballot on the ending of the York Agreement, containing the Provisions for Avoiding Disputes, and endorsed the demand for a consultation on the question of a national strike ballot.

The executives were not satisfied with the conclusions of the meeting so a special conference of the National Committee of the Amalgamated Engineering Union was held at Manchester on Saturday and Sunday, March 13th and 14th. At this meeting J. I. Brownlie, President of the Union, presided and three other executive members attended. A motion was put forward in support of the men who had ceased work at Hoe's. Before

this motion was put to the vote Brownlie stated "that the Committee regarded this resolution as a direct challenge, and if it were carried it would be construed as a vote of no confidence in the executive" ("Observer," 14th March, 1926). After that statement, an obvious trick to sway the delegates over to the side of the Executives, the motion was of course lost by a large majority. The next day a motion was carried supporting the policy of the executives.

Since then pressure has been exerted from all quarters on the Hoe workers—even to the extent of a threat to expel them from the union—and yesterday's (Saturday, 20th March) papers announce that they are resuming work on Monday under protest.

The attitude of the leaders, the daily papers, and the "New Leader" that the men should return to work and allow things to take the "constitutional" course, rather than do anything that would break the agreement, merits a few further remarks.

The leaders want a nice, properly-arranged strike that could proceed peacefully on its course without disturbing anybody or doing any real harm. This is evidenced by their concern for so-called essential services and the opinion of the "public."

The "public," about whom there is so much concern, is really the shopkeepers, the Press, and the "salaried" workers, the groups to whom the workers in general need pay no attention. They are the hangers-on and blind supporters of the employers in their attacks upon the workers, and from their ranks often come the blacklegs that help to defeat strikes.

The engineers, the coalminers, the railwaymen and others ought to know by now that a strike means the disorganisation of essential services or a failure. It is an attempt to force from the employers something the latter are not prepared to concede willingly. If all the essential services are arranged so that a strike will not disturb them; and if the employers are to be given weeks to prepare for the struggle, then how can the workers possibly expect success? Obviously they will only inflict minor discomfort on the employers, who can await with equanimity the rapid collapse of the movement owing to the privations suffered by the strikers.

As we have so often in these columns pointed out the limits of trade union action, I will forbear using up any more space on the subject.

GILMAC.

**SPORT AND SOCIALISM.**

Whereas the term "sport" was at one time associated with the idea of pleasure in "disporting" together, it would seem that the progress of Capitalism has rendered such an association (except in rare instances) ludicrous in relation to prevailing facts. It has, moreover, debased the original motive of social enjoyment into either a means to acquire profit, or into one of the potent methods of distracting the attention of the workers from the incessant gnawing of their problems of poverty and slavery. At the same time it helps to increase the physical efficiency (and thus the profit-making capacity) of those workers who participate, and provide an effective nerve-restorative for the tired wage-slaves who have merely the stamina required of spectators.

However far we may look back into the distant past, we fail to discover a period where games or sports of a similar character to those now indulged in were not prevalent. Indeed, Montague Shearman, who wrote the celebrated "History of Football," found traces of that pastime throughout the whole period of recorded history. It is not, however, our purpose to probe this question of origin, but rather, at this stage, to draw attention to the corrupting influence of Capitalism in revolutionising ideas which at one time were uninfluenced by the motives of a ruling class, and to point out that "sport," once free to all except the bodily impaired, has become, like other institutions, an organised business ministering predominately to the interests of the master class.

To those who may doubt the soundness of our contentions we would ask "Why do the master-class in their Press (which is largely dependent upon advertisement revenue) devote whole pages to the discussion of future sporting events?" "Why do they pour out reservoirs of slush in detailing the family history of Mademoiselle Pit-pat, who is to meet the doughty American champion, Tilly Slapbonk, at the Tooting Stadium?" "Why are we regaled with stories of the ingestive prowess of Charlie Bashem, and tales about the fondness of his protagonist, Teddy Tinribs, for Metaphysics and the Einstein Theory, before the inevitable fiasco is staged at the Talbot Hall?" "Would not the revenue to be derived from advertisements be more profitable than the insertion of some of this atrocious flap-doodle?" The answer to these questions is



simple; the paid scribes of the master-class have acquired the grip of your psychology and they know how to take advantage of your gregarious instincts and innate love of sport to blind you to the imperative necessity for devoting some time and energy to the study of your slave position and the means of escaping therefrom.

Religion, Patriotism and "Sport"—these form the holy trinity of dope lavishly ladled out by the ruling class. Quite recently, through its mouthpiece, the Duke of York, the Government announced its intention of devoting £200,000 towards the development of "sports" in the Civil Service. This token of good will towards its employees was accompanied by further instances of benevolent intentions in the wholesale sacking of temporary workers ("ex-service" and others) and strenuous efforts in the direction of "speeding-up" and depressing the already exiguous conditions of the "permanent" staff. Could a better example be adduced to show the paramount value of sport to the employer in his attempts to gloss over the glaring class-antagonism that now exists! It can be said, however, that this proposal of the Government was merely typical of the actions of the ordinary industrial "sweater" who will not demur at providing bowling greens for his employees or at subscribing to their football or other funds, but test his generosity in respect of the payment of higher wages or shortening hours of toil and a far different result is obtained!

Another aspect of the class division in society may be observed in the designations employed in various branches of "sport." We have the "amateur" and the "professional," the "gentleman" and the "player," the "select" clubs and the "working class" clubs; and the gulf between these divisions is the chasm that separates riches from poverty. It would be "infra dig" for a University boat-crew to row a race with a working class crew [especially as such a contest might reveal the unpalatable truth that the latter (who would be referred to as "those bounders") might achieve a "walk-over."!] Anyway, such a contest is inconceivable, for are not the workers, although capable of doing piece-work for eight hours at a stretch upon arduous and monotonous tasks, deficient in the stamina so essential for the sustained exertion of a twenty-minutes race?

Lest it be thought that the socialist is of the Puritan mould and disdains participation or interest in "sports" we can assure the reader that we begrudge the jaded worker none of the exhilaration he experiences in playing or looking on at games, and we see nothing pernicious in such indulgence provided he is alive also to his own class interests. Furthermore, the "sports" in favour with the workers are of a character entirely different from, and in no way so brutal or degrading as those held in regard by a large section of the bourgeoisie, whose atavistic desires, impulses, and propensities are fully catered for in the "blood" sports which occupy so much time and attention during a large portion of their useless existence. Tame, caged, deer and specially nurtured foxes afford excellent hunting material for these people of such "delicate sensibilities," but for whose genius, monumental industry, thrift, and "directive ability" (so we are assured), the worker would be bereft of the conspicuous amenities he is allowed to "enjoy"—amongst which amenities the hunting of a more prolific, a far less expensive kind of "livestock," is often an unwished-for privilege! We have no time for mawkish and sloppy sentiment—that can safely be left to our masters; but we confidently challenge the records of the most benighted "savage" customs to produce a more preposterous and equally abominable practice than that of "blooding" or bedaubing and smearing the blood of the slaughtered fox over the features of some girl of tender years after the completion of the chase. If additional evidence of the existence of a peculiarly "bourgeois" psychology is desired the pictures recently published in the Press depicting the "heroine" of the Quorn, whose horse fell dead beneath her during the hunt, should help to remove any doubts that might be entertained upon the subject. As to the effects upon character of these brutal "sports," is not the evidence to be found in the chronicles of the Divorce Court?

Fortunately, in but one respect, the economic conditions affecting the working class tend to produce in them a more tolerant attitude towards non-human varieties of animal life, but this phase of the subject is not entirely relevant to our purpose. The easy gotten plunder which enables a robber class to live without the expenditure of physical effort in wealth production, tends

to divert the energies of such a class in the direction profitable to their own comfort and pleasure, and so abundant leisure seeks its outlet in those "sports" which satisfy a craving for excitement and rescue idleness from the fetters of "ennui." On the other hand, the worker who spends much of his time in looking for, or in holding, a "job," is always afflicted by a desire to overcome the torture of insecurity. Hence some workers fall an easy prey to the press sirens of the master-class who encourage a belief that they can escape from poverty by "putting a bob on" or "beating the look" and such-like fantastic nonsense, and so lure them from the study of the one solution to their problems—Socialism. A little thought would convince the down-at-heel "punter" that the millionaire race-horse owner, and the "bookie" (that somewhat sebaceous gentleman of the expansive smile and a protuberant frontage, seemingly held together by a heavy gold chain, which partially circumscribes that modern denotation of prosperity) do not exist solely to dispense largesse to the poor and needy. But this disease of betting, in its present form, will be swept away when the workers have tested the remedy offered by the socialist.

Again we emphasise that we do not deplore "sport" as such, but we desire the workers to realise that the blighting influence of Capitalism has perverted the idea of seeking joy in social rivalries into a means on the one hand for the slaves to forget their lot, and so become more amenable to their task of grinding out profits, and, on the other hand, for the masters indulging in a quest for unwholesome pleasure, resulting in the reckless dissipation of wealth robbed from the wage-slaves.

Socialism alone can bring that joy which will express itself in an exuberance of healthful movement, such as is at present conceived of only in the dream which brings a transient solace to the weary worker when "slumber's chain" has bound him to a world of pleasant unreality. W.J.

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#### OPINIONS AND INTERESTS.

"The rise of the Labour and Socialist movement in this country is the greatest miracle in political history." Thus spake Mr. P. Snowden at a dinner of London Labour Mayors at the Florence Restaurant, on the 19th March. "Socialists," he continued, "are the most pronounced in their views. They hold a great variety of opinions. . . . But I have never had any concern about differences in the Labour Party. They are a sort of safety valve."

Complacency of this sort is to be expected of a successful Labour leader like Mr. Snowden. Staggered by the sheep-like trustfulness on the part of the workers which has elevated him to a place in the seats of the mighty, he can only describe it as a miracle,—something unnatural, something providential, something to thank God for! Mr. Snowden knows that whatever the differences in the Labour Party between right, left and centre, none of them are sufficiently vital to disturb the utility of the Party in helping to preserve the system which enables Mr. Snowden to get paid handsomely for his prostitute pen, not to speak of occasional Cabinet jobs.

The workers who expect to obtain some material advantage for their class through the agency of such a Party, however, need furiously to think.

Unanimity on points of detail is, of course, not to be expected of any group of human beings. Even the Catholic Church fails to enforce it. A political party without a common object, clearly defined, a general principle commonly accepted by its members is nevertheless only a snare for those who have not yet learned to think clearly.

What is the object of the Labour Party? No one knows. Some of its members assert that it is one thing, others emphatically contradict them. Even on the term, Socialism, they cannot agree. What principle forms its basis? Again, no one knows. While its more prominent leaders avow and disavow the class struggle, the rank and file spend their time in deciding which clique of leaders to trust. No wonder that the Liberals and Tories entrusted them with office.

The claim is often made by Communists and others that the Labour Party is entitled to respect as, with all its faults, it repre-



sents the workers. Actually it only represents *some* of the workers, possibly fifty per cent. These workers, however, are by no means agreed as to what they want nor how they are to obtain it, and it is therefore logically impossible to regard their *opinions* as expressing their *interests*. The *interests* of the working class are identical with Socialism, and we challenge anyone in or out of the Labour Party to contradict us. The *opinions* of the workers being mainly hostile or indifferent to Socialism are identical with those of the master class who, in fact, provide those opinions ready-made through the agency of the Press.

While this is the case, we of the Socialist Party have no ambition to represent the ignorance of the workers. We seek first to bring their opinions into line with their interests. All our propaganda is directed to this end. Upon details from time to time we may be divided, but upon the central facts of the working-class position and the policy logically flowing from those facts there is no division within our ranks.

"Yes," retorts the Labourite, "and you are in consequence but a few hundred strong, while we have organised millions behind us." The greater the weight of numbers, however, the greater the power. "What have you done with your millions?" is our reply. "Have you lifted the wealthy oppressors one inch from the backs of their slaves? Have you wrung so much as one miserable sop from the masters to appease our hunger or shelter our bodies?" No! So little respect have they for you and your miracles that they let you in to do their dirty work at home and abroad, and when they had finished with you for the nonce they turned you adrift again. Even now they are intensifying the misery of the workless, and all you can do is hold up your hands in affected and hypocritical horror (as you started the job) and whine like the old women you are. Already you have had chance after chance to justify your existence to the working class, and the net result is that the parasites laugh you to scorn while the workers continue to suffer. Practical men, are you? Very well, by your practices we judge you."

And what of the Communists who helped Mr. Snowden and his kidney at the last election? These "men of action." Where are the fruits of their five years of whirlwindy jargon and weathercock antics?

The Russian traveller, in the legend, cut down one of his horses to feed, and thus check, the wolves by whom he was pursued. Have the followers of the Communists any meat to show? No! But then they are merely sheep in wolves' clothing!

Only when the workers *know* will material gain be theirs. It is our mission to spread knowledge!  
E. B.

### THE ECONOMIC TREND.

When poverty, side by side with the material requirements for its removal, becomes as pronounced as it is to-day, our masters and their agents are driven to find more up-to-date excuses to explain away such contradictions. Once Tariff Reform and Free Trade served the purpose, according to the sectional trade interests of the Capitalists. To the Tariff Reformer, Germany was the paradise of the worker, and working-men were held breathless while the Free Traders told of trade booms, and of imports and exports beyond their comprehension. The outstanding fact the workers fail to understand is that, be "our" prosperity never so great, while wealth production is carried on for trade and profit purposes, such prosperity must here, as elsewhere, always be that of our masters, still leaving the producers in poverty. The latest nostrum, repeated almost daily in the press in the hope that it will be drilled into the workers' heads as a profound truth, is the prosperity in America. There, we are told, labour-saving devices are a blessing to the workers, and if we were to believe all we are told, the economic laws governing Capitalist Society appear not to operate. Americans, like other Capitalists, however, will allow their workers to produce wealth, only while markets for it are available. All countries vie with each other for what the "Daily Chronicle" in a series of articles calls "The World Race for Trade," but modern methods quickly outstrip the effective demand of such markets. Mere need means nothing to the workers, their power to consume any part of the wealth they alone produce is limited to the fraction they receive as wages. Under the fierce competition of to-day, lower prices of the things wages buy mean lowered wages. Even the relatively higher wage sometimes supposed to be a monopoly of America only means

on the whole a lower wage bill. Increased efficiency means fewer workers for a given amount of production. J. Ellis Barker, writing on American industrial methods ("Contemporary Review," March) proves the correctness of the above unintentionally, because he assumes markets to be unlimited in their capacity to absorb products. He estimates that "a single American railwayman does as much freight work as 5 Englishmen." "In coal-mining one American produce as much as 5 Englishmen." Obviously, with markets overstocked, for fewer to do the same amount of work as at present would only aggravate unemployment. Hear what the President of the International Chamber of Commerce, Mr. W. Leaf, a prominent banker, has to say ("Morning Post," 6/3/26):—

Everywhere, with hardly an exception, there are complaints of the difficulty of finding markets for manufactures. The capacity for production is there and is generally much larger than in pre-war times, but the products are stagnating.

Despite all their increased and cheapened production, despite the Capitalists' own profligate dissipation of wealth, they cannot find markets, and have now in all the principal industries to actually restrict production. Our evidence?—No, again their own:—

Our experience during the past 4 years has been that the lowering of the price of goods has stimulated demand very little. . . Only by curtailing our production on organised lines have we been able to minimise our heavy losses. Every business man must know that nothing but disaster can follow the making of goods for which there is no demand. (Sir Chas. Macara, Daily Mail Year Book, 1926, p. 31.)

That ought to be comforting news to the cotton operatives, an industry in which production has been increased, per unit of labour, possibly more than in any other industry. If the American myth were true, then the cotton operatives should enjoy unparalleled prosperity to-day, but short-time working and poverty is theirs as with other industries where similar increased productivity has taken place. America is no exception to the vicious circle in which Capitalism must travel. The greater the boom the greater and more prolonged the depression to follow. America in 1921 had her 6 million unemployed, and according to the New York correspondent of the "Economist" (6/3/26) there has been a sudden slump on Wall Street which "marks the end of a long upward movement, and was not

*altogether unexpected.*" Apart, however, from such warning, the crash is inevitable, for the reasons enumerated above. Such are the results of the private possession by an idle few of the means of life, which if held in common by all, to serve the needs of all, could give luxury for every human being with a minimum of effort. Why, year after year, chase each other country in turn down the blind alleys of more production, more trade and more work? These efforts, for others, can never give you more than increased poverty and insecurity. Face and study the situation, then you will learn that though industrially the developed means of production could provide increasing comfort and security for all, the Social Revolution which can bring that condition awaits the mental revolution of the workers for its realisation.  
MAC.

### NOTES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. E. BEER (Deptford). Your criticism of "The Fundamentals of Anarchism" will be dealt with next issue.

T. DOOR (E. London). Your letter on Unionism will appear next issue.

### STOCKPORT.

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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## THE RESULT OF "TRUST"

### A LESSON OF THE GREAT STRIKE.

Huxley once said that Hutchinson Stirling's "explanation" of Hegel had made the darkness opaque. So, it may be said, the "blackness" of Friday, 17th April, 1921, has been made to look almost white against the opaqueness of Wednesday, 12th May, 1926. The greatest Trade Union action that was ever taken in any country was closed by the most gigantic swindle in the whole history of Trade Unionism.

Numerous explanations are being given by members of the General Council, by "Right Wingers" and "Left Wingers," by Labour Party apologists, and industrial action idiots. It may be useful to examine some of these "explanations," even if certain important facts are not yet available to outsiders.

The Communists, who are "united" into several sections, issue two rival papers—"The Workers' Weekly" and the "Sunday Worker"—in contradiction to the instructions from Moscow. The "Sunday Worker" fills up a large space with the capitalist "dope" of betting and sports information, giving "tips" on horse-racing to those of its readers who may have become tired of the contradictory policies given in the leading articles. Like the rest of the Communists the writers in the "Sunday Worker" preach the slogan of "Follow your leaders." When, as in the present case, these "leaders" sell out their followers the excuse is made that they were "bad" leaders. The simple fact is that wherever the rank and file accept "leaders" such acceptance always provides the conditions for selling out. While the "Sunday Worker" encourages the following of

leaders it is helping to sell out the workers, no matter who those leaders may be. And in sheer wooden-headedness it admits this fact in the issue of 16th May, when it states:—

"The humiliating terms forced on the railwaymen is the result of Right Wing betrayal and Left Wing cowardice inside the General Council of the T.U.C."

And as the "Left Wing" are either members of the Communist Party, or supporters of Communist notions, the above quotation makes it clear that Communist leaders sell out as soon as any others.

On the next page of the same issue we are told:—

"At the end of the strike, when the Right Wing leaders, with the acquiescence and even support of some Left Wingers, left the miners in the lurch, while the workers stood bewildered, aghast, and finally deeply humiliated at this unexampled betrayal—all through the workers led the way."

"It will only be a step from this to the conclusion that they must now find leaders who will lead."

"The workers have had a practical demonstration—and the Left Wing's job is to drive the lesson home in the unions—that they must find new leaders, leaders who will fight instead of running away."

In brief, as the Left Wingers have displayed cowardice and supported betrayal the workers should now select—Left Wingers. Wonderfully simple!

To further illustrate the idiotic ignorance of the Communists, we are told in the same leading article that "Parliament very rapidly receded into its real place in the background." The Parliament that issued the Proclamation bringing into operation the Emergency Powers Act; the Parliament that day by day issued fresh regulations under



that Act, even to the forbidding of the importation of money to assist the strike; the Parliament whose orders prevented the "Sunday Worker" (see issue of 23rd May) as well as others, from stating what they wished to say, was supposed to have receded into the background. How curious.

"The Workers' Weekly," the official organ of the Communist Party, has had for its slogan, "All power to the General Council." In the issue of 21st May its leading article is headed, "Cashier the Cowards." Further on it says:—

"The truth cannot be concealed. We had men at the head of the General Council who were more afraid of winning than of losing."

"But why did the better and more virile of the members of the General Council—those we have called the 'Left Wing'—allow themselves to become involved in their panic?"

Only echo is left to answer. Then follows this brilliant gem:—

"The PRINCIPLE of All Power to the General Council was more than vindicated by the promptness and steadfastness of the rank and file. But clearly the COMPOSITION of the Council must be changed, and that at once."

That is, having "cashiered the cowards," the rank and file is to replace them by "more virile" Left Wingers who become involved in the cowards' panic. And is not the "principle" of all power to the General Council equally "vindicated" by the action of the latter on the 12th May? "Where ignorance is bliss," says Gray, "it is folly to be wise." The Communists must simply be overflowing with bliss.

Mr. Wheatley, M.P., is looked upon as a "Left Winger," and in "Forward" for 22nd May he reviews the situation. After stating that the workers have sustained a smashing reverse, he says:—

"Not only had the T.U.C. deserted the miners, but they had gratuitously thrown their own members to the wolves."

"One wondered how on earth those trade union leaders did not even stipulate, in return for their desertion of the miners, the unconditional reinstatement of their own members."

Further on he says:—

"Some days must elapse before we learn accurately all the causes of the dreadful debacle. But I have no doubt that when everything is straightened out cowardice will occupy a prominent position."

"From the first moment of the struggle, and indeed before it, prominent Labour leaders were whining and grovelling. The day before the General Strike was declared we were told by one

of the men who were going to lead us that defeat was certain."

Was it cowardice that prevented Mr. Wheatley publishing this latter statement when it was made? Or had he another reason? Time, perhaps, will tell.

"Lansbury's Labour Weekly" professes to give a "secret" history of the strike in the issue of the 22nd May, but there is very little information given that was not already public. The only two points that might deserve the term secret are given without any authority and must be treated on their own merits. The first point is stated as follows:—

"Finally, on Sunday night, or thereabouts, the war lords of the Cabinet, the same who had a week ago declared war, decided that the war must be turned into a counter-revolution. Information reached Eccleston Square that they had decided (a) to arrest the members of the General Council and of Local Strike Committees; (b) to call up the Army Reserve; (c) to rush through the packed House of Commons a Bill repealing the Trades Disputes Act, and thus making union funds definitely liable to seizure."

This statement *may* have been true; at any rate there is nothing inherently improbable in it. But the second point is on different lines:—

"On the other hand, there was the General Council believing that the Cabinet was about to use the last weapon on them, and knowing that, if they did so, the workers in every part of the country would certainly reply with reprisals—that in fact then 'industrial struggle' would, if the strike were not called off immediately, turn not merely into a political issue, but into a civil war, for which they had neither any desire nor any formal mandate."

This statement is not merely unsupported by any evidence—it is in contradiction to the facts of the case. Nowhere did the workers show any desire for civil war, nor any understanding of how to carry through such a war even if they did desire it. The paragraph is a piece of frothy bunkum written to excuse the General Council.

The "New Leader" for 21st May has a bitter cartoon on its front page of a miner with wife and child, and the line underneath, "Locked Out and Alone." In a leading article Mr. Brailsford deals with what he calls the "Inner History of the Great Strike." He examines the main features of a General Strike and the value of a partial strike, and rather leans towards the latter, in the form of an embargo on coal, as being more effective. Then he says:—

"The plan which was eventually adopted was a compromise which fell far short of a General

Strike. It was Mr. Bevin's work, and he was, throughout, the general, as Mr. Thomas was the diplomatist, of the struggle."

Later on he says:—

"Mr. Bevin foresaw what might happen when the strike came to an end, and laid it down as a condition, to which all agreed, that in the event of 'trade union agreements being placed in jeopardy . . . there will be no general resumption of work until those agreements are fully recognised.' That vital condition was forgotten when the end came."

On the next page, when dealing with the conduct of the negotiations, Mr. Brailsford makes the following significant statement:—

"It was unlucky that through all the critical days the miners had no representative of their own on the Council, for Mr. Tom Richards was seriously ill and Mr. Smillie absent in Scotland. The active, mobile mind, the leader in all the diplomacy, was Mr. Thomas. Him the miners deeply distrusted, and said so in the bluntest language before the Council. They felt that he gave away their case when he met the Government; they thought him more zealous to press them to accept wage cuts than to oppose the Government."

When the strike had started the General Council began to look for a way out and found, as they thought, a saviour in Samuel. What a godsend he seemed to some of that body can be gathered from Mr. Brailsford's remark:—

"Mr. Thomas was uneasy under the accusation of 'unconstitutional conduct'; he foresaw disorder and talked of the 'streets running with blood'—though strikers and policemen in this incorrigible English strike were playing cricket together. His one platform speech—if it was fairly reported—was that of a man who dreaded, and in fact disapproved, the strike for which he had voted."

Right up to Tuesday afternoon, 11th May, the negotiations over the Samuel Memoranda went on, with the miners' representatives refusing to accept it. On Tuesday night the Council came to a decision, and one prominent member told the driver who took him home from the meeting that "it was all over." Mr. Brailsford says:—

"The Council took its decision to end the strike on this Tuesday night, and took it *without informing the miners*. But it did inform the Government, and when it again met the miners on Wednesday morning it was only to beg them to join in a surrender which, in fact, they had already made. In the decision to call off the strike, the Council, Left and Right, was unanimous, and seemed to feel wholehearted satisfaction."

Summing up, Mr. Brailsford says that it was the blunt, undiplomatic miners, and not the skilful Mr. Thomas, who saw the plain reality. His final remark is:—

"But the deep stain upon them [the leaders]

is that in this struggle which had evoked the passionate loyalty, the selfless idealism of the mass, they sullied its record and nullified its sacrifices by abandoning the miners to their fate."

Except for an inspired article in the "Daily Herald" denouncing all who would dare to criticise the General Council, that body has said very little on their action, though some individual members have rushed into print—with disastrous results to themselves. Thus Messrs. Bevin, Walker and Findlay, tried to claim in an article in the "Sunday Worker," 23rd May, that Mr. Baldwin's statement as to the extent to which the Government were committed by the Samuel Memorandum was not in accordance with their information. And they called upon Sir Herbert Samuel to speak out. This statement is sheer bluff, as can be proved from the General Council's official Bulletin. In the "British Worker" for Wednesday evening, 12th May, appeared Mr. Samuel's letter, which contains the following paragraph:—

"I have made it clear to your Committee from the outset that I have been acting entirely on my own initiative, have received no authority from the Government, and can give no assurances on their behalf."

This clause in Mr. Samuel's letter is plain and unequivocal.—It cannot be misunderstood and makes the position of the Government quite clear. But Mr. Samuel, has called the bluff in an interview reported in the "Daily News" for Monday, 24th May. He repeated the statements given in the letter quoted above, and added:—

"No suggestion in any different sense was made by me at any stage."

Three supposed "Left Wingers," Messrs. Swales, Hicks and Tillett, have written an article in "Lansbury's Labour Weekly" for 22nd May, which opens with a brazen lie. They say:—

"The General Strike is ended, having served the purpose of urgent and necessary defence."

The "purpose" of the so-called General Strike, according to the General Council's statement in the "British Worker," was to secure the withdrawal of the lock-out notices and to obtain a decent standard of life for the miners. Not only has this purpose not been accomplished, but the General Council surrendered without asking for *any terms at all*. Yet these brazen liars can talk of the strike "having served its purpose"!

Perhaps the slimiest piece of hypocrisy is the article written by Ramsay MacDonald in "Forward" of 22nd May. It seems strange



he should not have published the article in his Party's paper, the "New Leader," but possibly the Editor of that journal may have raised objections. Had the article been signed by a Nonconformist parson it would easily pass as genuine, for it is full of sham religious phrases and forms.

We are told:—

"There was a religious fervour in the movement. The people were to be oppressed, and the people would not have it."

Fancy that! And some of us were so foolish as to imagine we had been oppressed for quite a long time. But, apparently, we were wrong. We were only "going to be oppressed," and we refused to have it.

Follows then a sermon on the strike containing the following remark:—

"Whoever has witnessed a first-class religious row being worked up in heathendom will have breathed a familiar atmosphere in London during the past week."

Fortunately a saviour was at hand:—

"But reason was harboured in Eccleston Square. The forces were kept well in hand, and when the substance of victory was gained by a bold and wise stroke, the Mad Mullah and his organ were left to cock-a-doodle-doo to the heavens for nothing."

And where is this "substance of victory"? Only in the imagination of misleaders like MacDonald, Tillett, Hicks, Swales and Co.

There are two curious facts worth noting about the General Council's handling of the strike. The first is that with Thomas, MacDonald, Bevin, Tillett, etc., at the head of affairs, it would have been quite a simple matter for the Government to have arranged a formula that would have swindled the miners quietly. The only reason why this was not done seems to be that the coal-owners desired an open victory for the purpose of intimidating the rest of the workers who were demanding increases in wages.

The second fact is the curious unanimity among the various critics in ascribing the gigantic swindle of a settlement to the "cowardice" of the General Council. The shrieks of the job-hunting, feather-headed Communists can be ignored, but "Lansbury's Weekly" labours the danger run by the General Council through several paragraphs as a sort of apology for their "cowardice," while the reasoned article of Brailsford quoted above follows the same line.

What was this "danger" to the General Council?

In any strike every member of the rank

and file runs the risk of losing his job at the end of the strike. If he has been an active member of his trade union, he runs the additional risk of being black-listed, and if the industry has a working combination, like the Railways, or is a Trust, like Tobacco and Cotton Thread, this black-listing will completely prevent him from obtaining a living in that line. A strike is, therefore, always a serious matter for the rank and file.

Then what of the officials? Apart from the personal discomfort of being imprisoned they run no risk at all! On the contrary, so far as his job is concerned, an official who suffers imprisonment for a trade union action is assured of his job for life, as he will be looked upon as a "hero" or a "martyr" in the cause. In the present instance it must be remembered that hundreds of the rank and file have been arrested and fined, or imprisoned, in some cases for merely being in possession of certain documents. And this, be it noticed, with hardly a single serious riot taking place during the whole strike.

While it may be granted that cowardice was one factor in the unconditional surrender of the General Council, in face of the above facts it does not fill the whole or even a major portion of the bill. Then what does?

Though the mine-owners desired an open victory, there were certain disturbing factors to be considered. Throughout the whole industrial field there was—and is—considerable discontent with wages and conditions of employment. Despite the bad state of trade, the leaders of the Engineers had considerable difficulty in preventing a strike. The Building Operatives, despite something of a boom, have found that to accept several reductions merely leads to more being demanded. Although the short memory of the working class is proverbial, the previous swindles of "Black Friday" and the railway strikes still rankle in the minds of many. These factors furnished the view that if the Miners were forced into a strike, large numbers of other workers would come out in support of the Miners without waiting for official sanction, or even against it. The problem was how to prevent such action taking place, or, if it took place, rendering it as ineffective as possible. One method would be to have a sham fight. Call a more or less "General" Strike for a few days and then find some pretext to close it down before too much damage was done.

## SOCIALISM AND MATERIALISM.

### A LABOUR M.P.'s CRITICISM AND OUR ANSWER.

To the Editor of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD.

I am aware that members of the S.P.G.B. are not likely to give me a great deal of credit for political sincerity, but I am a regular reader of the "Socialist Standard," and I appreciate the quality, invariably good, of its contents. Perhaps there is more in common with us than might be thought, for I, too, am disgusted when I am not amazed at the puerilities and futilities which pass for Socialist thought inside as well as outside the House of Commons.

You may be interested in some ideas suggested by your article on materialism. You state that your attitude "frankly rejects any attempt to explain society in terms of 'ideals,' whether Christian or otherwise," and that the conditions under which livelihood is obtained "determine, in the long run, the form taken by ideals of every kind." May I ask what school of opinion worthy of account attempts to explain society in terms of ideals or denies that material conditions, even if not always the bare economic, determine the form taken by ideals?

At the risk of being charged with "metaphysical hairsplitting," I would say that words like those underlined make all the difference to the argument. Those of us who interpret economic determinism in the inhibitive sense that "getting a livelihood" predominantly determines the channel of expression, rather than the causative, i.e., that it creates its own reflex of art and religion, fully admit all that is really conveyed in the words I have quoted. The real difference of opinion seems to be in this: on the one side it is asserted that ideas (ideals) are produced by economic conditions, on the other that certain human qualities are more fundamental than any shaping process, economic or otherwise, and cannot be ignored in the attempted explanation of human history. For instance, it may be that current fiction in handling the love-motive reflects capitalism in a characteristically tainted and hypocritical way, but who, with any knowledge of world literature, would say that capitalism "produced" love—any kind of love? Here, to put things at their lowest, is a great physical fact that is at the very basis of life, and to say that it plays a part essentially subordinate to private property, or that

The game was somewhat risky, for while in the view of some there was a doubt whether the men would come out, the far greater fear in the views of others (see, for instance, MacDonald's article quoted above) was that they would not get the men back at the appointed time. As it was the greed of many employers in at once demanding cuts in wages or alterations in conditions of employment, nearly spoilt the game, but Baldwin's appeal eased off the situation.

Such is the lesson. "Trust and ye shall be betrayed." After all the lessons of the past the same "leaders" were entrusted with power, and acted along the same lines as before. Which was to be expected. The workers have still a fair road to travel before they will get rid of the superstition of "Leadership" or the dope of "good" and "bad" leaders. But the splendid solidarity of the rank and file, along with their steady refusal to follow the maniacs who advise the formation of "Workers' Defence Corps" and other methods of crude force, are healthy signs of the beginnings of an understanding of their slave position that forms the first step in the work of establishing Socialism.

J. FITZGERALD.

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ideas do not spring out of all that love has ever meant in the world, appears to me a narrow and barren doctrine.

Another point. You say that "quite irrespective of what their opinions may be, men and women are compelled to look after 'number one'; and failure to do this spells annihilation." Surely, "number one" is here a most unfortunate expression! Not only does the article I am, so far, criticising emphasise the historical importance of association to avoid "annihilation," but it declares individualism to be a bankrupt creed and affirms "class," in action and consciousness, as the basis of Socialism. For the life of me I fail to understand why the substitution of "working-class" (three-fourths and more of mankind) for "humanity" lowers or effaces all ethical content in the idea of common good. It is all very well to say that Socialism is, primarily, a question of economic advantage to the working-class and that only the organisation of the working-class can achieve that advantage. All this is true. But, to me or to anyone else, the working-class is an impersonal abstraction.

I am a member of the working-class (or if I am not the man you argue with is, so don't boggle over my £400 a year, which, after all and counting incidental expenses, isn't worth the wage of a reasonably-paid mechanic) and would gain by Socialism. All the same, not agreeing with the I.L.P. that we can get "Socialism in our time" by magic, whether the working-class understand it or not, I do not expect to get out of Socialism in a material sense as much as I have put into it—or, shall we say, as much as I have thought I was putting into it. Not being a fool, I never did. Do you rule out of account everyone who does not find in Socialism an appeal, save in what is strictly an emotional though not necessarily unintelligent sense, to "number one"? I put this point in a personal way because I am the "number one" referred to, of course, and in so doing I am putting the case of hundreds of "number ones" who have a habit of preferring brass-tacks to metaphysics, however materialistic. As a matter of practical common-sense, what becomes of "class" if you discount idealism?

In conclusion, may I put the view that to say unkind things about philosophy does not alter the fact that we all provide ourselves with a philosophy of life, if it is only materialism. There is no need to sneer at what

is, after all, formal criticism of these individual philosophies. Personally, I think that in the last quarter of a century science itself has made an extraordinary difference to the philosophy of its own materialism and that you obstinately cling to an obsolete metaphysic and to conceptions and terms which no longer hold water. But that is another question—perhaps for another time.

F. MONTAGUE, M.P.

#### REPLY TO F. MONTAGUE.

The article in question which appeared in the April issue of the "S.S.," sought to present in a brief and simple form the practical aspect of the theory of historical materialism as formulated by Marx and Engels. Mr. Montague appears to have a grievance because the choice of words therein used left little loop-hole for his disagreement. He is so overcome by its relentless logic that he despairingly asks, "What school of opinion worthy of account attempts to explain society in terms of ideals, etc.?" He appears to have forgotten that the whole of the idealistic school of thought makes the attempt, not merely with reference to society, but to the universe at large. From Plato to Hegel man's being is explained by his consciousness rather than his consciousness by his being.

Mr. Montague next draws a distinction between what he calls the inhibitive and the causative senses of interpreting "economic determinism." This distinction, however, is only valid if he insists upon using the words "cause" and "create" in a metaphysical or absolute sense. Reversing his own question, what school of opinion worthy of account does this? Certainly not that of Marx and Engels, whose followers in this connection we claim to be. When we say that a given set of economic relations give rise to a particular form of art or religion, etc., we do not thereby imply that art or religion are "created" by conditions out of nothing, as it were. The problem as seen by Marx and Engels was how to account for the various forms taken by human society in all its aspects, and the solution for them lay in economic development, i.e., the constant change and growth in the tools of production and the relations of men in connection therewith. They made no attempt to discover some ultimate element in the human make-up to which everything could be referred. On the contrary, like

Darwin in the realm of biology, they sought for an *efficient*, not a *final*, cause operating in human history.

Mr. Montague asserts that "certain human qualities are more fundamental than any shaping process, economic or otherwise." This is probably intended to be taken seriously, yet five seconds' reflection should show its absurdity. Has Mr. Montague any knowledge of human beings existing apart from a shaping process? If not then how can their qualities be more fundamental than the environment to which they are related and in which they are inextricably involved?

Mr. Montague cites "love" as one of the qualities he refers to. It is no part of our case to show that capitalism has "produced" love; but if Mr. Montague denies that this "great physical fact . . . plays a part essentially subordinate to private property" in history, perhaps he will give us his explanation of the origin and development of monogamy and prostitution. The sexual and domestic relationships of modern society obviously take their form from its economic basis.

Our critic next tears a phrase from its context and treats it as though it had been advanced as a statement of an eternal truth; and endeavours to set it in contradiction to the general tenor of the article. It takes a philosopher to be blind to the obvious. The Socialist, living under capitalism, is under the painful necessity of acquiring, by hook or crook, a certain amount of money in order to exist. In this he does not differ from his fellow slaves; but this in no way alters the fact that his only hope of improvement lies in Socialism, which necessitates association, and herein lies the only rational explanation for his activities as a Socialist. His *motives*, of course, are not exclusively economic; but it is from a study of *conditions*, and not from introspection upon his motives, that he derives the conception of Socialism. With Mr. Montague's personal motives we have no concern.

"What becomes of *class*," we are asked, "if you discount idealism?" What becomes of idealism, Mr. Montague, if you admit the class struggle as the basis of Socialism and call upon the workers to organise upon that basis? Do not material interests form the bond of unity between the members of a class? Are our notions concerning these interests any clearer because we describe them as the demands of "im-

personal abstractions" (to use our critic's phrase) such as "justice" or "humanity?" Exploiting classes throughout history have used such war-cries to beguile their slaves and to flatter their own self-esteem; but to the workers, seeking emancipation, illusions are worse than useless.

Mr. Montague concludes with some accusations, proof of which he wisely defers—to another time!

Since writing the above a copy of the May issue of the "Social Democrat" has come to hand. It contains an article by the Editor (Mr. Montague) on "Is philosophy any use?" presenting similar views to those above dealt with, but this time including the "meat" which is obviously lacking in his "criticism." In his concluding paragraph he says, "Religion is a matter for the individual."

Here we have the matter in a nutshell. Mr. Montague is, of course, merely reiterating the position taken up long ago by the S.D.F., a position based upon "election expediency" (to quote Mr. Belfort Bax, another Social Democrat) which allows its members to angle for Christian votes.

In the same issue appears an article from Sir Henry Slesser, the democratic gentleman who so kindly assumed office, under the late-lamented Labour Government, without having been elected. He contends that the root of the social problem is the avariciousness of the individual. Well may he describe himself as a "mediaeval Socialist"! The summit of his cheek, however, is probably contained in his statement that his views are "more opposed to the assumptions of modern plutocracy and commercialism than those of the most doctrinaire Marxian." When Sir Henry was seeking election in 1923 the workers were asked to "Vote for Slesser and *Free Trade*!" These be your friends, O Montague!

EDIT. COM.

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JUNE,



1926

**THE GENERAL STRIKE FIASCO.****ITS CAUSES AND EFFECTS.**

The long anticipated month of May has come and nearly gone, and with it have evaporated both the fantastic hopes of the hot-heads of the Communist Party and the baseless fears of the nervous old women of both sexes who run the Primrose League, and kindred organisations. Mr. A. J. Cook has repeatedly promised us "the end of capitalism" if the mineowners attempted to force the miners' wages still further down; but in spite of the fact that the attempt is being made, with many prospects of success, the "revolution" obstinately refuses to materialise. In its place we have witnessed what looks suspiciously like the dying kick of Trades Unionism in its present form.

Four years ago (in our issue for April, 1922, to be precise) we definitely advocated combined action by the workers to resist the wholesale onslaught by the masters upon wages and working conditions. We did not promise a sweeping victory nor encouraged illusions regarding the ever-downward tendency of the standard of life of the workers under capitalism, but we did lay stress upon the necessity for making the best, instead of the worst, of a bad job, by means of an organised test of strength along class lines.

Experience had repeatedly shown that the

old sectional mode of industrial warfare was obsolete; that, while the development of industry had united the masters into giant combinations, with interests ramifying in every direction, supported at every point by the forces of the State, representing the entire capitalist class, the division among the workers, according to their occupations, led automatically to their steady defeat in detail. The only hope, even for the limited purpose of restricting the extent of the defeat, lay, therefore, in class combination.

The "Socialist Standard" has only a small circulation, and our words passed unheeded by the mass of the workers, doped both by the organs of capital and the counsels of their own leaders. They were too absorbed in the petty details of their sectional struggles to perceive the general conditions governing those struggles. They could not see the wood for the trees; or they saw it only in the blurred form visible through the spectacles provided for them by the Labour Party. Those of their number who looked to "nationalisation," piecemeal or wholesale, to solve their problems and end the class conflict, considered themselves "advanced"; and their duly sceptical fellows were regarded as reactionary and hopeless. Thus, economic and political ignorance kept the workers divided, and the defeats went on.

Yet even worms will turn, and rats forced into corners will fight; and it would, indeed, have been nothing less than supernatural if at length the steadily increasing pressure of their backs against the wall had not forced the hard truth into the workers' enslaved minds. There is a limit even to the stupidity of sheep; and not all the smooth-tongued eloquence of their shepherds could prevent the flock from realising that they may as well hang together as hang separately.

The first official indication of this changing outlook occurred last July when the threat of a further attack upon the slave-rations of the miners led the T.U.C. to intervene. The modesty of the workers' aspirations was proved by the ease with which their representatives were satisfied. The granting of a subsidy to the mineowners (in order to gain time and enable the Government and the master class as a whole to prepare for the wider struggle) was hailed by the entire Labour Press as a

"great victory." Subsequent events have shown the absurd hollowness of that claim.

While the miners were working through the winter increasing the stocks to enable their bosses to lock them out, their leaders wasted precious time and money in futile negotiations with those employers. While the Government proceeded coolly and leisurely with its scheme for maintaining essential services and breaking the resistance of the workers, the General Council of the T.U.C. took no step to similarly organise the efforts of the working class. Practically every section of any size (miners, engineers, railwaymen, transport workers), all had grounds for demanding increases in wages; yet instead of co-ordinating these demands in a common plan and thus giving a solid basis for united action, sectional negotiations were proceeded with, in honour of that capitalist shibboleth, the "sanctity of contract." The enemy was allowed, not merely choice of ground and weapons, but the opportunity to get in the first blow.

Much ink has been spent on discussing the responsibility for the breakdown of negotiations, yet it was plain for months that war was inevitable. Mr. Baldwin had made it plain that "all wages must come down," and that position, in practice, is still adhered to by the class which he represents. So far as the rank and file of trade unionists were concerned, the renewed attack on the miners was merely the commencement of a series of further attacks all round; and this fact, not some belated "sense of justice," explains their ready response to the signal for the general stoppage. Lacking any clear insight into their class position in society, however, they were guided by feeling rather than by reason, and blindly left the conduct of the struggle to the executives of the unions and the General Council.

The weakness of the leaders in the face of the common foe, their abject "begging and pleading for peace" (in the words of J. H. Thomas), merely expressed the disorganised condition of the movement as a whole. No such weakness characterised either the Government or the mineowners.

The lock-out notices were posted at the time appointed and the terms for their withdrawal laid down. Having allowed themselves to be bluffed and held off by months of diplomatic confab. the General

Council were forced, relentlessly, to act or abdicate. Yet to the last their irresolution was apparent.

Mr. A. Pugh, in a statement purporting to give "the real truth, in the "British Worker" of May 11th, said: "From the moment the mineowners issued lock-out notices to their workpeople, the question at issue, so far as the General Council was concerned, was the withdrawal of those notices as a condition preliminary to the conduct of negotiations. From that we have never receded." Yet according to the same statement, they continued negotiating right up to the evening of Sunday, the 2nd of May, two days after the lock-out notices were actually operating! They waited for the Government to give them the final ignominious kick, and this was duly administered on the pretext that the printers of the "Daily Mail" had more determination than their "leaders."

Once the stoppage commenced, however, these same leaders assumed all the airs of omniscient military generals. Pompous exhortations to the rank and file to "hold fast" and "remain calm and undaunted" were issued in their official Strike Bulletin what time they were already succumbing to the siren-like blandishments of that "friend" of the workers, Sir Herbert Samuel.

Not once had the leaders any cause to complain of lack of support. On all hands they admitted that the workers were solid behind them. In the issue already quoted they announced, "The number of strikers has not diminished, it is increasing. There are more workers out to-day than there have been at any moment since the strike began." Further, "the engineering shops and shipyards are to stop to-night. . . . The men have awaited the instructions impatiently, and all over the country they received their marching orders with enthusiasm and a sense of relief."

As an expression of working-class solidarity the response of the rank and file was unquestionably unprecedented; but the long months, nay, years of delay found effect in the official confusion between "essential" and non-essential occupations, the handling of goods by some unions which were banned by others and the issuing of permits one day which had to be withdrawn the next. Just prior to the strike the railwaymen were working overtime providing the com-



panies with the coal to run their blackleg trains. Afterwards they refused to handle any traffic at all while the transport workers tried to pick and choose. The lack of practical unity with which to give expression to the sentiment and secure the end in view justifies, up to the hilt, our long-standing criticism of Trade Unions upon their present base.

The confusion on the industrial field was reflected in the political sphere. In spite of the obvious fact that they were involved in a class struggle and that the machinery of government was being brought to bear at every point, the Council fatuously endeavoured to represent the issue as purely industrial. They endeavoured to confine the efforts of a class to the point at stake in one industry. They thus denied the very basis of their own existence, i.e., class interests; but if they were blind to the logic of the conflict, the Government were not. They brazenly declared the whole affair to be an attack upon the Constitution and Parliamentary methods. In order to obscure the class character of their own acts, they invoked the mildewed pillars of the "nation." According to their spokesmen, the Council with whom they had been negotiating had suddenly become "an alternative government." With unerring judgment they saw in the manifestation of working-class solidarity the latent possibility of revolution.

The only objective of a social revolution, however, is Socialism. The very facts, that the Government were in power, that millions of workers had supported them less than two years ago at the polls and that those who did not were, in the main, far from understanding Socialism, rendered any immediate question of revolution ridiculous. It was the ultimate outcome of the ceaseless struggle to which their apprehensions gave expression.

The role played by the Labour Party corresponded with that of the General Council. While disclaiming any desire to see the Government defeated by the strikers, they nevertheless proclaimed from their platforms that the Government were responsible for the "trouble." "Had the Labour Party been in office," men were told, "such a situation could not have arisen." They relied upon the short memories of their followers who omitted to remind them of the loco' and transport strikes during

"Labour's" term of office, and the application of the Emergency Powers Act by these false "friends." In their eyes the Government's chief crime lay not in its support of the mineowners, but in its breaking off of negotiations with the General Council. The lock-out and the strike were secondary matters compared with their being shut out from the counsels of their beloved friends, the bosses.

True to their sham romantic outlook, the Communists covered themselves with "glory" by circulating wild rumours as to disaffection among the troops. They performed the worst service possible to the workers by trying to persuade them that the soldiery would not fire if called upon. Fortunately few people took them seriously, and in the main, the only sufferers from their advice were themselves. The importance of possessing political power was brought well to the front in repression of anything in the nature of incitement, and the bulk of the workers showed their keen appreciation of the fact in their orderly behaviour.

A sinister secrecy surrounds the capitulation of the General Council on May 12th. At the time of writing they have yet to give an account of their action to their constituents, the T.U.C. Their cool contempt for the intelligence of their followers is easily gauged by the correspondence between themselves and Sir H. Samuel, which they had the audacity to publish in the "British Worker" of the 13th.

The emissary of "peace" frankly stated that he "acted entirely on his own initiative, had received no authority from the Government and could give no assurances on their behalf." Yet on the strength of this diplomat's unofficial memorandum (rejected on the 12th by the miners' officials) the General Council "terminated the strike assuming that the subsidy would be renewed and the lock-out notices would be immediately withdrawn."

We are not prepared to state in what exact proportion the ingredients of treachery and cowardice were mingled in the composition of the General Council. Suffice it that the miners remain locked-out and that, thanks to the capitalist terms of peace, even the rank and file are not deceived as to what has actually happened. Union after union has signed a treaty of surrender which leaves the workers worse off than ever. In addition

tion to this the unemployed army on the Exchange books has swollen to the tune of half-a-million, thus giving the employers an unparalleled opportunity for further inroads upon wages and working conditions. The height of enthusiasm reached by the workers during the strike is now matched by the depth of demoralisation of the leaders everywhere apparent.

The outlook before the workers is black, indeed, but not hopeless, if they will but learn the lessons of this greatest of all disasters. "Trust your leaders!" we were adjured in the Press and from the platforms of the Labour Party, and the folly of such sheep-like trust is now glaring. The workers must learn to trust only in themselves. They must themselves realise their position and decide the line of action to be taken. They must elect their officials to take orders, not to give them!

Most important of all, however, they must change the object of their organisation. Even in the now unlikely event of the miners gaining the day over the wages question, how much will the necessary sacrifice avail them? The reorganisation of the industry, to which they have agreed, will, on the admissions of its promoters, spell more unemployment among the miners! Are they prepared in face of recent experience to trust any capitalist promise such as is contained in the suggestions of the Samuel memorandum? And what becomes of their prospect of wage improvements? At the very best they will but be marking time.

On every hand it is evident that the downward pressure upon the slave-class will continue until they unite to end their slave-status. The sentiment of solidarity must be embodied in practical organisation based, not upon the mere transient necessity for wage adjustments, but upon the permanent need of the workers for the abolition of the wages system.

That can be secured only through the establishment of Socialism by the conversion of the means of living into the common property of the whole people.

To that end the workers must organise as a class, not merely industrially, for the capture of supreme power as represented by the political machine. For this purpose neither the Labour Party nor the Communist Party is of any value. The former is hopelessly compromised with the ruling class, while the latter ignores the basis of political power. It is useless for the

workers either to "trust" leaders or to "change" them. The entire institution of leadership must be swept by the board.

The one thing necessary is a full recognition by the workers themselves of the hostility of interests between themselves and their masters. Organised on that basis, refusing to be tricked and bluffed by promises or stampeded into violence by threats, they will emerge victorious from the age-long struggle. Win Political Power! That is the first step.

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### THE STRIKE.

The largest battle in English industrial history is over and the wounded are being carried off the field.

The first point that strikes one, after making the necessary allowance for the intimidation of the nervous, is the amazing solidarity of the workers on this occasion. The consciousness, dim though it may have been in the main, that they must make common cause and stand together, though only one section was being immediately attacked.

The next point was the demonstration of where the *power* really lies in modern affairs. The control of the governmental machinery gave the masters the key to the situation.

Strictly speaking it was not a general strike, but it was general enough to make apparent the limitations of such a method as a weapon to be used by the workers in their struggle for emancipation. The advocates of direct action had little to find fault with. On the Monday night the strike was declared and on the Tuesday morning the transport services were paralysed. In almost every instance the workers, unionist and non-unionist alike, answered the call. In many cases workers came out who had not been called upon to do so. As time progressed more and more workers came out and there was little sign of any returning. From this point of view, then, the strike was a success—it was as complete as may be wished, and lasted for nine full days, and yet the food supply was not paralysed nor seriously disturbed.

An ordinary strike depends for its success upon putting the masters to so much expense that they would prefer to concede the conditions demanded by the workers (whether reduction of hours, increase of wages, or similar demands) than bear the expense and disorganisation of a strike. In other words, they are faced with the problem of the respective costs of resisting or conceding the demands and decide accordingly.

It is not necessary, for the purpose of the argument, to consider those strikes or lock-outs instigated by the masters when a favourable opportunity has presented itself for depressing the workers' condition. For instance, when there is a surplus of certain goods or, as in the coal industry, when the summer is coming with a slump in the demand for domestic coal.

Employers in different branches of industry support each other (apart from the uni-

versal intermingling of capital in different concerns) because a successful strike in one branch might lead to strikes in others. On the other hand, as the making of profit is hindered by industrial troubles, and as dissatisfied workers do not work well, the threat of a strike is sometimes sufficient to force the employers' hands and obtain concessions.

When we come to a strike of the huge dimensions of the recent one the position is entirely different. It is in effect a challenge to State power. The demand, made on behalf of the mass of the workers, was that a Government, placed in power mainly by the votes of the workers, should be *forced*, without regard to their wishes, to take action in a given direction. That is to relinquish their political functions as the generally accepted and approved guardians of society and capitulate to one section in the community—or starve.

A calm, passionless examination of this position makes it clear that under such conditions no capitalist Government dare surrender—for such in fact would be its action. To have submitted to defeat in these circumstances would have left the way open for the workers to put forward whatever demands they wished, backing them with the threat of a general strike. This was the more likely at the moment, because wage struggles were already on the board in other industries as well as the coal industry. We may interpolate here that, had the employers themselves deliberately planned the recent industrial upheaval the result all round, as far as they are concerned, could hardly have taken a more favourable turn. They have been able to settle many of their difficulties, such as the redundant labour in the rail industry brought about by the fusion of companies a few years ago, and nipped in the bud further strike trouble for a year or two.

What action did the Government take in this emergency? Already during the railway strike of 1919 plans had been prepared to deal with the sudden cessation of the transport services. Since that time the plans had been further perfected, and now was the time to test them. From the point of view of the supporters of direct action, in this higher developed form, the evolution of the oil engine has been disastrous. The employers and what are called the "professional classes" (the last section of the proletariat likely to become revolutionary) are accustomed to learning motor driving as a

hobby, and, consequently, there was available a large reserve of prospective drivers for the transport services, quite apart from the professional drivers and other assistants that could be obtained from the Army, Navy, and Air Force. With petrol lorries and an odd train or two it was possible to provide sufficient transport to meet the essential food requirements of the nation. As time passed it became increasingly evident that this could be done for several weeks. The fact that there was a good deal of muddle does not matter; the point is that the Government could have muddled through sufficiently well to meet the needs of the population until the strikers could not tighten their belts any further, so that starvation would have finally driven the workers either to surrender, extinction, or the shambles. And this was, is, and will be true of all attempts at industrial action on such a vast scale, involving serious interference with the food supply.

By their control of political power the Government were able to put their transport plan into action and to prevent any interference with it. They were also able to put the Emergency Powers Act into operation and effectively silence any disturbing opposition. To the last action the Labour Party can say nothing, as, when in power, they themselves were prepared to evoke the same black spectre when threatened with a large strike.

The cold hard fact has been made plain once more that "unless they are prepared to give up the kingdom of this earth the working class must some day take the political power into their own hands." Until they do so they must expect defeat in industrial battles of any great magnitude.

So far we have pointed out that, in this strike, the workers must ultimately have been defeated. This might lead some to believe that on this particular occasion the workers were defeated. Such a view would be entirely erroneous. The workers came out solidly and, in the main, gave every evidence of a determination to remain out solidly for quite a while longer. But in the meantime the leaders had decided otherwise, and without a shadow of a solid guarantee that the object of the strike had been achieved—the withdrawal of the lock-out notices against the miners, and the removal of the stipulation by the mine-owners of a reduction in the miners' wages as a preliminary to coal negotiations—the strike was

called off. This was not defeat, but deserves another and much more ugly name. Already details of the sordid business are leaking out, and some of the erstwhile trustworthy leaders are likely to lose their reputations. In time, no doubt, the whole truth will come out and the workers may learn more quickly the frailty of leadership in general, and the broken reed they are leaning on.

We have often flogged the leadership idea in these columns, but must plead the "occasion" as an excuse for mentioning just one or two points again.

The method of handling the strike was bad from beginning to end, from the point of view of advantage to the workers. Before anything in the nature of a general strike took place the whole of the workers concerned should have had an opportunity of expressing their view upon it by means of a ballot. And no such strike should have been undertaken unless there was a substantial majority in favour of it. The method of handling the situation during the strike should have been also decided upon by those taking part, before the strike was put into operation. Delegates from the unions should have been deputed to carry out the strike with no power to make any arrangements for ending it without first consulting all those on strike, who should themselves have decided the ending in the same way as they decided its commencement. With a full knowledge beforehand of the difficulties the strike would place in the way of carrying out this programme, arrangements should have been made to enable it to be done. To put the matter another way, there should have been no leaders in whom to place a trust that could be betrayed, but rather delegates to carry out instructions formulated by those taking part in the strike. Until such a method operates, both industrially and politically, it will always be open to leaders to betray their following. In the present instance, A. J. Cook, the Miners' Secretary, speaking at an open-air demonstration at Porth, in the Rhondda Valley, on the 23rd May last, is reported as follows:—

"I say to the railwaymen that one of the greatest crimes that can be laid at the door of their leaders is that they not only left the miners in the lurch and betrayed them, but they betrayed the railwaymen."—*Daily News*, 24 5/26.

Had the line we have indicated been followed in the conducting of the strike, then there would have been no question of be-



trayal by leaders, as there would have been no leaders to betray. Those who were suffering would have put an end to that suffering when they had decided the suffering had gone far enough. As it is, so far as immediate matters are concerned, their suffering has been not only entirely wasted, but it has placed the miners in a far worse position than before. On top of that, each group of workers has had to give up certain of their hard-won privileges and depleted both funds and enthusiasm for the future wage fights that had already loomed up.

What we have said should have made clear by now the only real solution to this, and all the other economic troubles afflicting the workers. If the workers had been as solid in voting for Socialism as they have been in striking on behalf of the miners what a different tale there would be to tell! And yet, as long as the workers support a condition of things which lays it down as a fundamental proposition that there shall be employers and employed, capitalists and wage-slaves; and at election time puts control of the governmental machinery into the hands of the masters and their supporters, they must expect defeat in their struggle for better conditions. The solution of the difficulties lies in the workers' own hands. The substitution of common ownership in the means of wealth production in place of the present private property system, and the accomplishment of this end by voting delegates to the central seat of power at election times to carry out instructions formulated by their working-class electorate.

In conclusion, let the strike engrave deeply upon the mind of the workers the evil of leadership, good, bad or indifferent; the solidarity and ruthlessness of the master-class when they think their privileges are in danger; and finally, the utter hopelessness of attempting anything that might shake the foundations of capitalism without, as a preliminary, getting control of political power, which can be done quite constitutionally without the risks attaching to industrial action.

If these lessons are laid to heart then the strike will not have been in vain, and the victims will, in the fullness of time, reap their reward.

GILMAC.

### STOCKPORT.

Those interested in forming a branch of the Party in Stockport are invited to communicate with THE GENERAL SECRETARY, 17, MOUNT PLEASANT, LONDON, W.C.1.

## OWNERSHIP AND POLITICAL POWER.

We have received an Edinburgh journal called "The Proletariat," the organ of the British Section of the Socialist Labour Party. This is a body which has "existed" since 1912 and broke away from the now defunct Socialist Labour Party. Why they call themselves the British Section it is hard to judge, because the other Socialist Labour Party (in America) repudiate them.

"The State of the S.P.G.B." is the title of an article purporting to deal with us. The state of this British Section of the S.L.P. may be judged from their criticism which we quote:—

"To show how far misconception dominates the S.P.G.B., Engels, in the closing chapters of *Origin of the Family*, points out that the State derives all its substance *via* taxation from the economic factors. These dominate the State which includes the Army and Navy. In a word, *condition* them in the fullest meaning of the term. And, further, the capitalist class to-day, who are the economic masters of all wealth, mark you, the civil power, subject that military thing to their requirements, increase or decrease it as the case demands. The owners of the economic wealth factors are masters of the situation.

"The S.P.G.B. position that 'dispossession necessitates disarmament,' suggests that it is the armed force that dominates the situation, and consequently, from the Marxian position, must be ruled out."

Can criticism be more idiotic?

Ownership depends upon power to maintain possession, and therefore the capitalists depend upon their control of political power, which gives control of the armed forces. As Marx says in the Communist Manifesto, the first step in the emancipation of the working class is the winning of political supremacy. Engels, in his "Retrospect," points out the all-importance of political action for the purpose of wresting control from the hands of the employing class.

The recent general strike completely justifies our position that those who control the armed forces dominate the situation. Hence a capitalist victory.

Our critics quote from the January, 1925, issue of the "Socialist Standard" on disarmament. Let us give the full statement from that issue:

"Ownership to-day consists not in occupation but in mere legal title, meaningless, unless recognised and upheld by the forces of the State. The overthrow of the capitalist ownership, therefore, and the establishment of common ownership, involves the capture of the State by the working-class. Dispossession necessitates disarmament. The organisation of the working-class must, there-

fore, be a political organisation, i.e., a Socialist Party."

Like all other species of Anarchists the so-called S.L.P. of Edinburgh offer no alternative to political action. A. KOHN.

## THE GOSPEL OF THE NATIONAL CITIZENS' UNION.

The "New Voice" is the organ of the National Citizens' Union (late Middle Class Union). It pretends a great hatred of a mixture it calls Socialism, whilst its dislike of Marx is almost an obsession. They do not, of course, waste time dealing with his teachings, but are pained because he "sneers at the Lamb of God," lays down the doctrine of "legalised promiscuity," and says that the "working men have no country." True, Marx does mention, in passing, the appropriate relation of the "Lamb of God" to the sheep-like nature of Christians, so does he point out that what the possessing class own, the country, cannot be taken from the workers who do not own it. The less said about promiscuity from the master class point of view the better, for it is they who overcrowd the Divorce Courts, and whose liaisons bring to light matter that their own gutter press shrink from printing. Reading from page to page the "Voice" threatens, warns, pleads (for funds), and in a spasm of candour concedes the following:—

Between religion and social reform there was a natural and close connection; between social reform and Socialism a gulf wide and deep. Yet the two are continually confused, as e.g., when Socialism is attributed to the gospels.

To the above, we specially draw the attention of Labourites and Hot Gospellers. Though such a statement is calculated to frighten the timid; its admission by no means prevents the N.C.U. doing the same thing in this same issue. A report tells us that, after one of these social reformers had outlined his case for Nationalisation (a typical reform), "our representative" easily disposed of the "Socialist," and the "Socialists" were asked to come again. No doubt such opponents are easy, and useful, to the N.C.U. They keep alive the illusion that Nationalisation, which must worsen the workers' conditions, is Socialism. When we, however, wish to debate, the N.C.U., like the I.L.P. and the other reformers, are not having any. Still, they have a little sense of humour, for at one of

their meetings, at Harrogate, we read that one Geo. Robey spluttered these words:—

The trouble of the day was disinclination to work. If the people of this country did not get down to it soon, one of the questions that would be asked in the schools would be "If it takes a bricklayer 5 days to lay 4 bricks how long will the plumber be before he puts the washer on the tap."

Work is, at any time, a delicate subject with the workers, and although the above may go down with a Harrogate audience, it might with a Canning Town crowd, despite their love of toil, result in George getting the "Bird." To talk of "disinclination to work" to those who have monopolised it all, the "working" class, is a joke unconsciously perpetrated. The remainder may pass for humour with those who go to "business" instead of work, give services for "salary" instead of wages, and who "resign" instead of getting the "bullet," or being "pieced up." Such people are about to be rudely awakened by Capitalist development. When like the rest of the workers they abandon their fawning subservience, whether they lay bricks or plans, music-hall clowns and others will waste their breath when they chant threadbare platitudes in order to win Capitalist approbation or honours.

MAC.

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Fridays: West Ham, Water Lane, Stratford, 7.30 p.m.  
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**SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road. Discussion last Thursday in month. Open to all.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Communications to E. Jesper, 74, Murdoch-rd., Birmingham. Branch meets A.E.U. Institute, Spicel-st., every Saturday

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to A. Jacobs, Sec., 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at 141 Bow-rd.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Andrew Porter, 12a, Kings-rd., Portobello.

**GLASGOW.**—Communications to Sec., J. Higgins, 816, Rutherglen-rd., Oatlands, Glasgow.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Saturdays, 7 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare Street, Hackney. Discussions after Branch Business. Communications to Secretary at above address.

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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## SHALL WE EMIGRATE ?

A World Migration Congress met in London on June 22nd, having been convened by the International Federation of Trades Unions, and the Labour and Socialist International, in order to discuss the problem of migration from the standpoint of the workers. As the problem is full of pitfalls, is the cause of much racial hostility between workers of different nationalities, and can easily lead to a dangerous waste of working-class energies, it is worth while considering the arguments of those who organised the Congress.

The lengthy report submitted to the Congress ("World Migration of Labour") is a useful collection of interesting information concerning movements of population in every part of the world, but it fails completely to grasp the essentials of the problem, its attitude is throughout anti-Socialist, and despite the no doubt good intentions of those responsible, the effects of the policies advocated would be almost wholly pernicious from the workers' standpoint.

The initial error—common enough with rash enthusiasts too hasty to digest their material—is the innocent acceptance without preliminary definition of terms which bristle with obscurities. We need only consider one of these because on its meaning depends the greater part of the arguments used. What, for instance, does "over-population" mean? It is not a simple question of arithmetic. It would be absurd to suggest that the uninhabitable arctic regions are under-populated as compared with, say, the U.S.A.; obviously natural factors must be taken into account. It is equally obvious that the same natural resources in succeeding ages with improved

means of wealth production can support larger populations. Again, it is true that, as industry is organised to-day, it will be found generally that dense populations can more conveniently be maintained in manufacturing and mining areas than in agricultural areas. These simple qualifications are seen by the author of the report, but what he fails to see are the additional and even more important reservations necessary to justify the definition he finally accepts, without examination, from the economists. Over-population exists, he says, when the number of people in a given area exceeds a so-called optimum density. The optimum, in the sense used by the economists, is that number which gives a maximum productivity of wealth per head of the population. Any addition to or subtraction from that number will lead to a decrease in productivity. Now we can admit that the idea, although abstract and incapable of wide application, has its uses within certain well-defined limits; it does help to introduce some kind of order into chaos. But the writer of the report has forgotten to observe those well-defined limits and has never realised that the conception is useless for the solution here and now of the economic problems of the workers.

Why is it inapplicable? The definition in question relates to productivity per head of the population in a given area; but it does not concern itself with asking whose productivity, or how the product is distributed among the population. Adam Smith, 170 years ago, made a very true and simple statement, so true and so simple that it is beneath the notice of our instructors to-day. He pointed out that the amount of wealth



produced over a given population depended on two factors—the productivity of the producers and the proportion which the producers bore to the whole population. Again, while it is true, of what use is it to be told merely that the wealth produced in this country or that, is so many pounds or dollars per head, unless we know who consumes that wealth? The average wealth of any millionaire and any pauper is £500,000, but this, while statistically correct, does not help us to understand the real relations of the two individuals. In fact, in every capitalist nation we have a property-owning, non-producing class which nevertheless enjoys a very large share of the wealth which it has not helped to produce. The report goes into stupid raptures about American prosperity “unexampled in the history of the world” (279), and informs us that “skilled workers can demand—and obtain—wages that sound fabulous in the ears of the European” (p. 17). It does not mention the various factors which make a simple comparison of money wages in U.S.A. with money wages elsewhere invalid, and what is of more importance, it does not point out, as does the recent U.S.A. Federal Trade Commission Report, “that 13 per cent. of the population own 90 per cent. of the wealth.” It overlooks the fact that the proportion of the wealth they produce actually consumed by the American workers is probably lower than in any European country and that the proportion is not increasing. The 1925 United States census of manufacturers discloses the fact that in the motor industry, one of the most prosperous of all industries, in 1925, “only 32.4 per cent. of the value created in the industry went to wages, compared with 40 per cent. in 1923 and 38.6 per cent. in 1919” (American Appeal, June 5th).

The above shows the objection to applying this definition of over-population to working-class problems inside capitalist society, because it assumes that high productivity benefits the workers by increasing their income, whereas, in fact, no such result need follow. Another fatal objection is that it entirely ignores the cost of production in terms of human labour. From the point of view of the slave-owner, the horse-owner or the exploiter of wage-workers, the production of wealth by others than himself is an end in itself—the more produced the more for him without any

cost. But what of the slave, the horse, or the worker? If they get no more, their interest is plainly to have increased leisure and ignore increasing the production of wealth. But it is also against the workers' real interests to increase wealth production, even when they do get an increased income, if—as in America—that increased income largely represents a mere increase in the supply of fuel to maintain a human machine which is being worked at a greater speed. In this connection it may, too, be as well to point out that opinions are not quite unanimous on the question of American prosperity.

Sir Leo Chiozza Money (*Daily Chronicle*, March 24th, 1926) raises some pertinent objections. He points out that, among American miners, although mining is technically much easier owing to natural advantages, the death rate is much higher—which may not matter to those who live on mining profits, and which does not appear in statistics of wealth production, but is surely a point of interest to the miners. He says, “It is clear that, at least in some cases, they enjoy less than the standard of life which obtains in Britain,” and quotes the report of the U.S.A. Coal Commission, 1925, to the effect that “Too many of the American mining camps and towns are dreary and depressing places in which to live . . . heaps of manure within a few feet of the dwelling, garbage and other refuse awaiting collection for days, showers of flies and clouds of dust.” It is also curious, in view of the worker's “fabulous prosperity,” that, in the words of this official report, “sullen hostility prevails to an astonishing extent among the American mine workers.”

To return to our general criticism of the method of approach to the problem, we can say that every generalisation applied to such abstractions as “the industry,” and “the nation,” etc., has the defect that it ignores the separate and usually conflicting interests of employers and employed. To accept such generalisations leads to the unconscious advocacy of capitalist as opposed to working-class interests.

When we examine some of the detailed suggestions we see the danger and the absurd contradictions such loose thinking produces.

Stress is laid on the alleged danger of the worker's standard of life being undermined by immigrant workers. The writer

just glimpses for one moment and immediately forgets the fact that it is *not* the immigrant worker who actually does or can cause this undermining. The only person who can and does is the home employer, to whom the immigrant merely serves as an additional weapon. It ought also to be obvious by now that if the low-standard Chinaman is a danger to the white man in, say, British Columbia, because he can produce more cheaply, he is just as much a danger whether he comes to British Columbia or whether he stays at home—hence the futility of trying to keep him out. Cheap labour is cheap labour everywhere, and if capital is looking for cheap labour and cannot get it at home it will simply go where the cheap labour is to be found, and the goods produced in China will compete just as strongly in the Canadian market as they would if made there.

Many of the Labour apologists, for capitalism, having now discovered this, are busy advocating protectionist capitalism instead of free trade capitalism, which, again, does not solve the worker's problems.

The report contradicts its own argument when it informs us (p. 9) that foreign competition is caused by the emigration of skilled workers to other countries, where they get a higher standard of living. By the time it is recognised that low-wage and high-wage production under capitalism have precisely the same effect, it is time surely to realise that capitalism is the enemy. But advocating the abolition of capitalism is just the one thing these Labourites will not do. We are told (279) that universal free trade will not solve the present economic evils because “the present economic evils of Europe are more deep-seated. Moreover, they are chiefly confined to Europe; the United States has no reason to complain; it has entered upon a cycle of economic prosperity unexampled in the history of the world.”

The facts are distorted, but especially we must notice the extraordinary assertion that the evils of Europe are “chiefly confined (italics theirs) to Europe.” If America, the land of the most brutal capitalism, with the most violent contrasts of wealth and poverty, is exempt from these evils, plainly, in view of those who think on these lines, capitalism cannot be the cause of the evils. Logically, therefore, they do not advocate its abolition.

They see three alternative solutions

(p. 986) for the less industrialised countries of Europe: (a) industrialisation, (b) emigration, (c) restriction of population—not a word about Socialism.

Throughout the report there is much insistence on the so-called principle that migration policy should be based on “solely economic” factors. What on earth is an economic factor? If a government with tropical possessions uses taxation as a means of driving natives off their land, they are then driven by “economic” pressure to seek other means of livelihood elsewhere. In short, they are compelled to “migrate.”

But the attempt to limit consideration to the so-called economic aspect is absurd. Political control enables the ruling class to achieve their purpose by imposing this taxation, and the removal of that ruling class is a political problem. This is the essence of the whole migration question as it affects the workers, and it is the essence of all the workers' “economic” problems.

The statement is made, quite truly for what it is worth, that “the natural result of over-population is the lowering of the standard of living” (289). It is true simply because over-population has already been defined as that condition in which wealth production declines. Our muddled migrationists then convert this useless truism into the utterly unwarranted assertion that the existence of poverty and unemployment proves that over-population exists. If it were true that England has millions of poor people and of unemployed because of over-population, we should expect to find all the people of England poor, and particularly all the unemployed poor. Actually, only workers are poor, and only some of the unemployed. Those of the unemployed who are property owners and have never had to work, are not poor. In face of the fact that in every part of the capitalist world there are property owners, non-producers living at the expense of the workers, and in face of the admitted colossal waste of existing powers of production, to urge the workers to neglect the one essential problem in order to go cap-in-hand begging concessions for emigrants from the capitalist ruling class is disgusting, and, from the worker's point of view, a suicidal policy.

The workers are not poor because of over-population, or low-wage immigrants, or foreign competition from high or low wage countries, or because America



bars further immigrants, or because of protection or free trade, or because they don't work hard enough, or because they work too hard, or because raw materials are monopolised by certain capitalist groups, *the workers are poor because they are workers*. They live in a capitalist world, where property in the means of life means wealth, and propertylessness means the necessity of working and its accompaniment economic subjection and poverty. There are no purely economic problems. The conditions of production and of the worker's standard of living are set by the capitalist system. Ending exploitation, utilising existing powers of production to the full, eliminating waste, are all dependent on the solution of the political problem of the conquest of political power. Through Parliament, the workers, when they wish, can eliminate all obstacles which now prevent the solution of any of these problems except on lines approved by and in the interests of the capitalist class. The work our Labour migrationists are doing is the work of the capitalist class, whether they realise this or not.

H.

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#### CAN WE DO WITHOUT CAPITAL?

A correspondent asks:—

"How can the workers do without capital? I quite agree that they do not get a fair wage in many cases; but if capital were abolished, as you suggest, where would the money come from to pay any wages at all? Would it not be far more practicable to limit profits by law and compel the employers to give the balance to the workers in the shape of increased wages?"

Our correspondent, like a good many people, seizes upon a half-truth and loses sight of other facts which would enable him to understand it. It is, of course, quite true that wages form part of capital, and that the abolition of capital involves the abolition of wages; but only a person ignorant of history and economics imagines that the workers have always depended upon wages and must continue to do so.

Capitalism has not always existed. In the modern sense it dates in England from the sixteenth century. Previous to that time the workers were either peasants or handicraftsmen. The peasants, whether bond or free, held at least sufficient land on which to grow their own foodstuffs, etc., while the craftsmen in the towns owned their own tools and sold the products of their hands on their own account. All of them rendered tribute to their feudal lords either in labour, kind, money or military service, but in few cases did they depend upon wages. In fact, the bulk of the wealth then produced was for the direct use, either of the producers, or of their superiors in the social scale. Only a comparatively small surplus was for sale, and, consequently, money played a correspondingly small part in the affairs of mankind.

The merchants and moneylenders of those days occupied a subordinate and despised position in society, little dreaming of the future which lay before their successors, the modern capitalists.

If we enquire still further back into social development, we discover yet other conditions of labour, such as the chattel-slavery of Greece and Rome and the primitive communism of the barbaric races. Under these conditions, wages and capital in all its forms were as yet undeveloped.

The barbaric tribesmen hunted, fished, pastured cattle or rudely tilled the soil without waiting for any enterprising capitalist to come along to provide them with work.

On the other hand, the slave-owners of the ancient empires had no need to disguise the fact that they lived by exploiting their slaves. They possessed the persons of the workers and consequently had to feed, clothe, and house them. They no more thought of paying them wages than a farmer thinks of paying wages to his cattle.

If our correspondent has followed the argument thus far, he will see that the dependence of the workers upon masters arises out of the control by the latter of the means of living. Where the workers possessed their own means of producing wealth (as in the case of the barbarian or the mediæval craftsmen) they were able also to appropriate the fruits of their labour without asking the permission of masters. It is only where a class has appropriated either the persons of the workers, the land on which they live, or the instruments by which they produce wealth that the workers become the exploited chattels, serfs or wage-slaves.

Further, it is only when the powers of production have reached their present scale, when most of the wealth is produced for sale, that the bulk of the population become dependent upon wages; but why have goods to be sold, and whence arises the need for money? The answer lies in the fact that the different instruments of labour, the mines, factories, farms, etc., are all the private property of different individuals or groups and that the products of labour become the private property of these groups likewise. Wealth to-day, therefore, can only be distributed by a process of exchange between the respective owners of commodities.

The workers, however, only possess their own energy. They lack the means whereby to apply it to nature in order to maintain themselves. All the accumulated fruits of the labour of their ancestors have been appropriated by a small class who have no need to labour; for the workers are compelled to offer their power to produce, in exchange for the means of subsistence. Seeing that nearly everything is produced for sale, these means take the form of money-wages—by which the capitalists become the possessors of the force which wins wealth from nature. The workers produce a much greater value than is represented by their wages, however, and this value, when realised by the sale of the goods produced, thus yields a surplus from which the capitalist class derive their income.

The Socialist, approaching the matter scientifically, rather than sentimentally, is not concerned to argue about the "fairness" or "justice" of this order of things. From the workers' point of view such argument is mere waste of time, seeing that the only standard of "justice" admissible under the present system is based upon the exchange of commodities, *on the average*, at their value. Thus, without doubt, the workers, *on the average*, obtain their dues according to capitalist canons. They obtain the value of their commodity, that is to say, they receive enough to enable them to replace the energy they expend in the production of wealth. This, however, does not alter the fact that the process involves their exploitation and is, therefore, contrary to their interests.

It is, then, from the conflict between the interests of the workers and the masters that the Socialist develops his proposition for the overthrow of capitalism. This conflict, which manifests itself on the industrial field in an endless series of strikes and lock-outs, must find expression on the political field also. Here it can only have one conclusion; that is, the organised capture of the machinery of government by the working-class who constitute the ever-increasing majority of the population.

Let us now consider our correspondent's proposition, i.e., the legal limitation of profits. What party is going to introduce such a measure he does not tell us. It is difficult to conceive any such measure being seriously adopted except as a last resort, a sop with which to buy off a steadily growing revolutionary class. Admitting its possibility, however, our correspondent has not indicated what he considers a fair profit or a fair wage, nor how such an arbitrary standard of fairness could be enforced. The experience of centuries shows that Acts of Parliament cannot alter the trend of economic development unless they uproot entirely the property conditions.

Thus we find that legal efforts to keep wages down after the Black Death, failed because the number of labourers remained so small. Not until the great enclosures of land commenced, with the resulting dispossession of the peasantry, did the price of labour-power become subject to a steady fall.

To-day, any attempt to keep up the level of wages, much less increase it, has to contend with the rapid and constant improve-



ment in labour-saving machinery, which increases the number of the unemployed, intensifying the competition for jobs, and thereby weakening the resistance of the workers to wage-reductions.

Thus, there is already at work a force tending to increase profits more rapidly than a legal enactment could limit them; and the workers are left with the only remedy for their poverty-stricken, enslaved condition, that is, the conversion of the instruments of labour into the common property of all.

When that has been accomplished by means of their political control, they will no longer need wages. The products of labour, like the means of production, will be common property, accessible to all without money and without price. In the place of competitive exchange there will be established a system of co-operative distribution. Our correspondent's question is, therefore, answered.

The workers can do without capital just so soon as they exercise their collective knowledge and organise democratically to obtain possession and control of the means of living; for the term "capital" simply expresses the fact that the means of social labour, and consequently the products of that labour are private property. In the same way, the terms "wages" expresses the fact that the power to labour is a mere commodity, exploited for the profit of those who purchase it.

When the workers act as we foresee, these terms will simply become as meaningless and obsolete as the terms of the feudal law ("villeinage" and "suzerainty") or those of ancient Rome with its "patrons" and "clients," its "bond" and "free." In the place of class-society we shall have humanity.

E. B.

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## CAPITALISM IN THE TROPICS.

The Labour Research Department (162, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1.) has recently published a sixty-four page pamphlet entitled, "British Imperialism in East Africa," price 1s. Much of the information contained therein has appeared from time to time in these columns, the principal exception being a variety of statistics concerning capital investments, etc.

The pamphlet deals, necessarily briefly, with the expropriation of the native tribes of Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, and Nyassaland; and their progressive conversion into wage-slaves, producing foodstuffs and raw materials for the European markets such as coffee, sisal, cotton, maize, hides, soda, etc. The authors also show how the developments in these countries open up markets for the products of European industry, particularly of the "heavy" variety.

The countries mentioned comprise (with Northern Rhodesia) an area of over a million square miles, the total population being roughly only twelve millions, over 99 per cent. of whom are natives. They have come under Imperial control in a somewhat similar manner to that by which India became "the brightest jewel in the British Crown." Invaded in the first place by mercantile companies who maintained their own armed forces, they soon presented problems with which these companies were incompetent to deal. Africa produced in miniature the same revolts of the populace and mutinies among the native soldiery which led, in India, to the replacing of "John Company" by Victoria, Regina et Imperator. In other words, the forces of the State were sent to the rescue of private enterprise.

In the case of Africa, "philanthropy" and missionary effort formed a very convenient cloak for the hungry figure of capital seeking its constant quarry, profit. It had been, to some slight extent, forestalled by the Arab colonies which had existed for centuries on the East Coast, in perpetual conflict with the Portuguese adventurers. The Arab power was founded upon chattel-slavery, and its periodical incursions among the natives of the interior had for their prime object the recruiting of the slave-markets. To supplant the Arabs and establish the European method of exploitation, it was necessary to stamp out the slave trade.

The hypocrisy of the capitalist found full vent. Gunboats and railways drove the

dhows and caravans of the votaries of Allah from the field of commerce, and the blessings of Jehovah were invoked upon the process. The conflict of material interests was disguised by the contest between Jesus and Mahomet.

The up-to-date resources of capitalism rapidly transformed the scene. The various isolated tribes of natives (some living by hunting on the plains and in the forests, some by pasturing cattle, and others by rude tillage) were roughly disillusioned as to the intentions of their "deliverers." The Arabs chastised them with whips, but the Europeans introduced economic scorpions in the shape of reserves, to which the natives were confined, coupled with taxation upon the hut or the head.

In order to find the money with which to pay the taxes, the natives slowly but surely find their way from the reserves to the plantations and townships, as these arise, there to labour for the profit of the invaders. The sudden raids of the chattel-hunters gave way to the permanent exploitation of the whole population. The fruits of this new dominion find expression in overcrowding, under-feeding and the consequent spread of epidemic diseases previously unknown in the country, with additional disadvantages in the shape of an occasional war. Of the 150,000 unarmed porters raised in Kenya during the campaign to acquire the neighbouring German Territory, over 40,000 were killed or died of disease (page 33). Habits of life which are relatively harmless under native conditions, naturally become the vehicle of pestilence under the conditions of city life, or those obtaining in the now overcrowded reserves.

Other interesting facts dealt with in the pamphlet are the methods by which the capitalist administrative powers corrupt the institutions of the natives. The chiefs become transformed from guardians of their people into the agents of the oppressors. The compulsory labour ordinances, which are found necessary as a supplement to taxation, are enforced by their aid. The result is the development of native organisations in opposition to the whole machinery of government, which the missionaries strive to bring into constitutional channels. Early in 1922, the arrest of the Secretary of one of these native bodies led to a mass protest in Nairobi, and the slaughter of about thirty natives by the police as a reply. (This occurrence was dealt

with in more detail in these columns in the issue of July, 1922). In one detail, the pamphlet under review is, here, inaccurate. No attempt was made by the crowd to rush the "prison" where Thuku was detained. The approach of a detachment of troops created a stampede, during which the armed police in the lines lost their heads and fired without orders!

What relationship does this enslavement bear to that of the workers in Europe? Here the pamphlet is confusing. Apparently the authors consider that the workers pay the taxes by which interest on development loans is guaranteed. It should be obvious however that if the taxes were not raised for that purpose the workers would gain nothing. The "saving" would simply benefit some other section of their exploiters.

The authors are on firmer ground when they contend that capitalist development abroad is based upon the extended exploitation of the workers at home. The profits on the commodities of all sorts poured into the tropics by European labour go to the employing-class. The workers have thus no interest in extending markets; but that is not all. Sooner or later the point must be reached at which this development will react upon home conditions. The creation of new proletariat in the tropics intensifies the competition between the workers of the world. It renders their standard of life still less secure, and adds to the ranks of the unemployed. Such are the fruits of imperialism for the wage-slaves. Thus they must eventually unite upon the basis of their common interest, emancipation, irrespective of race or colour!

E. B.

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**The Socialist Standard,**

JULY,

1926

**SHOULD WE ATTACK RELIGION?**

There are still many people who think we made a grave error in publishing our pamphlet, "Socialism and Religion." Some would explain their objection on the grounds of a sentimental regard for the feelings of the weak, or the elderly, who find some sort of consolation in religion. Others regret it on the score that it will lose us voters, and support. It was felt to be a gratuitous smack in the face to an institution comparatively harmless and inoffensive.

There are several answers to these points, most of which are contained in the pamphlet itself, but perhaps two recent happenings, considered entirely without prejudice, will make the position clearer than any amount of abstract reasoning.

To the *New Statesman* of June 12th, a correspondent sent a letter on "The Churches and the General Strike." In the course of it he quotes from the June number of the Dominican magazine *Blackfriars*, an article by Father J. B. Reeves, on the relations of Catholics to the State. The italics are the correspondent's, and the quotation, he says, is merely an example. Here it is:—

We refuse to uphold or assist anything in so far as it repudiates the traditional claim of the Catholic Church in England to be the supreme judge in England of all moral questions that may arise here; and we hold that all economic, social, and political questions are moral questions.

It should be clear from that pronouncement, that we are attacking no harmless survival of the picturesque past; no merely cheerful social centre for the simple and the gentle, the humane and the kindly. No! We launch our offensive at what claims to be the supreme judge of all economic, social and political questions in England, or, for that matter, elsewhere.

But wait a minute. Are there any qualifications to the Catholic Church's modest claim? What would an apologist say? Would he contend the point was a purely academic one, and could have no validity in practice? In that case, it was not worth making. Would it be urged that it was an arrogant assumption, confined to the Roman Church and its communicants? To that we should reply directing attention to Anglican Bishops in the House of Lords; the noble work of all kinds of Christians in the late Great War, work of a political character, advocating adhesion and loyalty to King and Country, and conducting parties of fellow Christians into the shambles. Would it be pleaded that the claim of "supreme judge," is merely a rhetorical flourish—the Catholic Church having no political power—and merely indicates that the "supreme judge" would limit itself to the giving of advice. We have something to say on that head, too. On what ground does the judge expect his advice to be followed? Obviously by the power he wields over those he is judging. And what power does the Catholic Church, or any church, wield over its adherents? In our opinion, that of fear, based on ignorance. The common dislike of death, the sadness of bereavement, the fear of the Unknown, the dread born of ignorance, these are combined and manufactured into a bogey by the Church. Death becomes an obsession, and the Church makes a fat living by trading on the fear of dying. This is the power of the Church over the people, a very real power of which governments have availed themselves, time and again.

But there is one further point. IS the question as stated in the quotation, entirely academic? Those who read Cardinal Bourne's declaration during the General Strike will be able to answer it themselves. For those who did not, or who have forgotten it, we quote from it the following:—

There is no moral justification for a general strike of this character. It is a direct challenge to a lawfully constituted authority, and inflicts

without adequate reason (his italics), immense discomfort and injury on millions of our fellow countrymen. It is therefore, a sin against the obedience which we owe to God, who is the source of that authority, and against the charity and brotherly love which are our due to our brethren.

All are bound to uphold and assist the Government, which is the lawfully constituted authority of the country, and represents, therefore, in its own appointed sphere (his italics) the authority of God himself (our italics).

So now, with the two quotations, you have a complete philosophy of the function the Church would like to perform in the State. Combine the two, and you get this:—

The Government represents God himself: the general strike is a sin against God: we, the supreme judge of social, political and economic questions charge you with disobedience to God.

It needs but to add, that the Cardinal's message appeared in the Government's strike organ, *The British Gazette*, of May 12th, for the connection to be seen between religion and government. Anticipating quibbles about the respective merits, or utterances of Anglican as against the Roman or the Free Churches against either, we submit that it was RELIGION that spoke, and the British Government that utilised it. It was religion that spoke, its voice a little husky with saying the same thing for thousands of years, but religion true and authentic. One can imagine the Cardinal turning a regretful eye on the stacks of thumb-screws, racks and stakes of a more accommodating period, but we wonder whether his philosophy will undergo a subtle change when "a lawfully-constituted Socialist Government" (forgive the anachronism) succeeds that of the capitalists. May we live to see it; and the Cardinal too.

**KNOWLEDGE.**

The following Books can be obtained from Head Office:—

**Anarchism and Socialism.** Plechanoff. 3/6, paper 1/2.  
**Civil War in France.** Marx 2/9.

**Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844.** Engels. 5/-

**Critique of Political Economy** Marx. 6/6.

**18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon.** Marx. 3/6.

**Evolution of Property.** Lafargue. 3/6, limp 1/6.

**Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.** Engels. 3/6.

**Poverty of Philosophy.** Marx. 6/6.

**Revolution and Counter-Revolution.** Marx. 3/6, limp 1/6.

**Social and Philosophical Studies.** Lafargue. 3/6.

**Socialism: Utopian and Scientific.** Engels. 3/6, limp 1/6. Postage extra.

**SOCIALISM AND MATERIALISM.**  
**A LABOUR M.P.'S REJOINDER AND OUR REPLY.**

The Editor, **SOCIALIST STANDARD.**

Sir,—I am obliged for your interesting reply to my letter. Perhaps you are able to find room for the following further observations.

You state that the whole of the idealistic school attempts to explain society in terms of ideals. In the absolute sense this is true, and I am convicted of using a careless phrase. But the unconscious dualism of the materialist is revealed clearly in the sentence, "from Plato to Hegel man's being is explained by his consciousness rather than his consciousness by his being." Except as a doctrine of supernatural implications, I do not understand what can be meant by "consciousness" and "being" considered as separate entities. I certainly do not attempt to explain either by the other, for both are part of the same evolutionary fact.

You ask, "How can the qualities of human beings be more fundamental than the environment to which they are related and in which they are inextricably involved?" Agreed. But when you speak of environment you speak of something bigger than economics and something which is not exclusively external. Strictly speaking, embryological facts are as much environmental as any other. I am aware of the ambiguity of the word "fundamental," and I use the word only in the sense that a larger category of events may include smaller ones. Heredity cannot be ruled out. And you cannot rule out the intellectual history of the race in accounting for the culture of a period.

"The only hope of improvement for a wage-slave is in Socialism." That depends upon the wage-slave. He may have ability, courage and no conscience. He may then become a capitalist jackal, a scab, or a "labour leader," and would do so in strict conformity with a philosophy which makes man's "being" his belly. And it would be, to say the least, foolish to call him names if there is no ethical standard by which to judge conduct and only the stomach to explain it. The unfortunate feature of the whole situation is that the process leaves you with the incompetents on your hands.

Please do not misunderstand me. I am



putting a case and offering you an explanation of a fact to which you so frequently draw attention—the existence of a whole tribe of working-class misleaders. These, if they are as venal as you say they are, seem to have absorbed non-moralism exceedingly well.

You have not answered my question, "What becomes of 'class' if you discount idealism?" Material interests are first of all personal interests; they only become class interests when combination offers a reasonable prospective of collective advantage. The prospect of Socialism is somewhat uncertain—not to put too fine a point on it. I don't fancy the odds at present, and I am not prepared to invest in the apathy and folly of my class. Any one of us is a hopeless dud if he could not have made his personal circumstances more secure, to say the least, had he never touched Socialism. The Socialist movement as yet calls for considerable sacrifice, and to put it in order you offer a post-dated cheque—or rather, an undated one, on the bank of revolution!

No wonder you say you have no concern with my personal motives, which, in the main, are much like other people's. If you had concern with motives you would understand the psychology of class better. All that comes out of purely material motives even our way (if it is in any sense your way or mine) is "never mind what, but get it quick—we can't wait." Which is perfectly natural, if you "discount idealism." Why should anyone ignore any old fleshpots that might be knocking about for the sake of "this day, next day, sometime, never," in the light of the progress of the S.P.G.B. or even the S.D.F.? Come, sir, you must all be high-souled philanthropists without knowing it.

In practical fact, "class-consciousness" is only "brotherhood of man," minus the exploiting classes. There is as much cant about one as the other. As for capitalists exploiting "war-cries," they would prostitute anything and do nearly everything. All the more reason why we should insist upon the validity of certain "abstractions."

I am asked to explain the origin and development of monogamy and prostitution if love does not play a part essentially subordinate to private property. Monogamy is a social custom hardly collateral with capitalist society or of capitalist origin, and it can be only very doubtfully described as a

property reflex. It has nothing to do, in any case, with the subordination or otherwise of love, which is an impulse that antedates primitive communism and is shared by man with all sentient life and perhaps with the mineral kingdom. Prostitution is the oldest profession in the world, and a social phenomenon that runs through epochs of economic variations cannot, without gross misuse of language, be said to be "subordinate" to anything but its own passion. Strange you should have placed the two things together. Doesn't prostitution cancel out monogamy, any way?

In conclusion, if my "friends" had to be exclusively those who think exactly as I think, I should have few "friends." Why should I object to Sir Henry Slesser airing views that are not mine in the paper I edit? And why the unctious of "these be your friends"? Do you not share the "economic man" theory with all the Liberal gradgrinds and Tory buccaneers whatever?

Yours faithfully,

F. MONTAGUE.

#### OUR REPLY.

It is a trifle difficult to take Mr. Montague seriously. He appears to be bent on the time-honoured pastime of setting up Aunt Sallies and knocking them down again. The original article which he attempted to criticise commenced with a reference to a plea by one of his political colleagues for "a new society based upon Christianity." We sought to show that society is based upon economic development and not upon religious beliefs. Unable to show us wrong in this respect, Mr. Montague accuses us of all manner of philosophical errors which he equally fails to prove.

This time it is "unconscious dualism" of which we are alleged to be guilty because, forsooth, we distinguish, in the abstract, between man's "consciousness" and his "being." Does not man's being include his consciousness, as the greater includes the less, or is his consciousness all-embracing and exhaustive? De we judge an individual simply by what he *thinks* of himself? Must we accept every ruling class at its own valuation? These questions only need to be asked to illustrate the absurdity of the idealist position. But is Mr. Montague an idealist? In his first letter (June issue) he asserted "that certain human qualities are more fundamental than any

shaping process, economic or otherwise." Now he "agrees" that they are not! No wonder he does "not attempt to explain either by the other!"

This does not prevent him, however, from persisting in regarding the individual and his "personal motives" as the all-important factor in social development. He may pay lip-service to what he calls "economic determinism" but he evidently does not understand it. For instance, he refers to a whole tribe of working-class misleaders and appears to attribute their position to their "ability," "courage," and lack of "conscience," instead of to the economic pressure arising from the conditions of capitalist society.

According to Mr. Montague, the bulk of the working-class are "hopeless duds," seeing that, although they have not "touched Socialism," their "personal circumstances" become increasingly less secure! "The Socialist movement as yet calls for considerable sacrifice!" Capitalism, of course, doesn't, eh! Mr. Montague?

Our critic imagines that any unscrupulous scoundrel can get the best of modern society. He appears to be blind to the operation of the economic factors which care as little for personal motives as do the winds and tides.

"Material interests are first of all personal interests," he says, but fails to explain how any person can exist apart from some class in a class-society.

"Class-consciousness" he regards as a moral term akin to the "brotherhood of man." He ignores the fact that "minus the exploiting classes," the term would be meaningless. Class-consciousness implies the conception, not merely of identity, but of antagonism in the economic realm. This antagonism cannot be explained by ethical abstractions, which only serve to confuse the workers' minds and thus delay the hour of their triumph.

Mr. Montague's handling of monogamy and prostitution indicates a very shallow knowledge of the subject. Monogamy is more than a social custom. It is a legal institution and, as such, bears the unmistakable impress of its origin in the private ownership of the means of life. There have been other forms of private property besides that at present obtaining, and we did not suggest that capitalism alone was responsible for the origin and development of this form of sexual relationship. Modern

marriage and prostitution in all its forms imply the economic dependence of the woman upon the man. This condition did not exist under the communal arrangements of primitive society, and sexual relations were, as a consequence, of a widely different character from those which at present prevail. We have not space here to describe them in detail, but Mr. Montague would be well-advised to study Morgan's "Ancient Society," and Engel's "Origin of the Family" before indulging in more random generalisations about "love." Women sell themselves, in marriage or out of it, because their economic circumstances so determine; and prostitution, so far from "cancelling out" monogamy, supplements it. The capitalist's legal wife presents him with heirs to his invested wealth. His paramours help him to enjoy that which overflows from the field of investment.

In conclusion, we referred to Sir H. Slesser in order to illustrate our contention that, politically, Mr. Montague keeps strange company for an alleged Socialist, which does not exactly tend to remove our suspicions as to the utility of philosophy. As for the "economic man" theory, we should have credited even a member of the S.D.F. with knowing better!

Ed., Com.

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## MUST WE CONVERT THE MAJORITY?

### A CRITICISM AND OUR REPLY.

London, N.8.

To the Editor.

I have read your pamphlet "Socialism" with interest and, although I agree wholeheartedly with your analysis of capitalism, I would like to offer a criticism of your theory of the method of bringing about the new society. You state on page 43 "The first essential then, of having a vote of revolutionary quality is to have a working class that thoroughly understands its position in society." Undoubtedly, if we could get a majority of voters at a General Election who *thoroughly understood* their position in society and voted solely for Socialism, all would be well. But it's the *if*. May I here give you a quotation which has a bearing on my point. The first is from G. B. Shaw, who says, "I remember when I was busy as an unpaid and quite sincere Socialist agitator in this country . . . one of the things that puzzled me at first was that I met with so little opposition. I found that I was almost like a clergyman talking pious platitudes. Nobody objected. Nothing happened. I apparently carried my audiences enthusiastically with me. Nevertheless, capitalism went on just the same. I began to understand that the leaders of Socialism, the men with the requisite brains and political comprehension, must not wait as Kautsky would have them wait, on the plea that you must do nothing until you have converted the people and can win a bloodless victory through the ballot-box. *The people seldom know what they want, and never know how to get it.*" The next is from "Psychoanalysis," by Andre Triden. "The real enemies of progress have always been the enormous sluggish masses of the people without imagination, suffering from neophobia, the fear of new things. Such people only move when the changes in their normal environment become so great as to be intolerable, and goad them to action. Then they move, as bullocks move before the stockman's whip. There are many indications that changes in the environment which will lead to such movement are rapidly approaching; we may expect, in consequence of the tendencies inherent in capitalism, an enormous increase in the mass of active discontent at no distant date. The discontented man is the hope of the world."

These two quotations sum up my objection to your method of achieving Socialism, not that I would rather a class-conscious majority voted a real Socialist Party to power, but our desires must not blind us to things as they are. The capitalist class control the sources of education, the Press, etc., the progress of real socialist education is so slow and withal we have the fact that capitalism is in a state of decline forcing large masses on to the unemployed scrap heap, lowering wages and hence, strikes and discontent everywhere. The question is, can a minority of educated men (in the event of a collapse of the ruling powers through another great war, for instance) lead the discontented and chaotic elements of the working class to institute a new authority after the Russian plan?

We know that Lenin had to compromise with the peasantry, and that State Capitalism is practically the system now in Russia, despite the C.P.G.B. assertions to the contrary. Yet I think you will agree that Lenin was justified in seizing "The Psychological moment" and instituting a dictatorship where a new and differently educated people will grow up who will set about moulding a Socialist State. I hope you will deal with this letter in the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Yours for Socialism,  
W. BROUGH.

### REPLY TO W. BROUGH.

If Mr. Brough agrees with the analysis of capitalism presented in our pamphlet, he will agree that the central fact revealed by that analysis is the existence of a class struggle. We claim that our method is the only one consistent with that fact, and our correspondent has failed to indicate a logical alternative.

A new system of society can only result from the operation of forces already existing in the present one. It can arise only from a change in the relationship between the producers and the means of production, i.e., the emancipation of the working-class by the conversion of the means of production, etc., into common property. This emancipation being opposed to the interests of the present ruling class (the capitalist proprietors) will, naturally, be resisted by them as long as they possess the means of resistance. The most important of these means is the political

machinery (including the armed forces of the nation) hence the necessity for its capture by the working-class.

Mr. Brough suggests, on the analogy of what happened in Russia in 1917, that a minority of educated men can lead a discontented but *chaotic* mass of workers to establish a similar dictatorship. He *assumes*, however, as a necessary condition, "a collapse of the ruling powers through another great war, for instance." The folly of basing the methods of a political party upon mere assumptions is strikingly illustrated by the history of Russian "Communism" since the date mentioned.

The Bolsheviks *assumed* that a world upheaval on the part of the workers was impending at the time they took action. Misled by this assumption, they took up a position in advance of the class upon which they depended for support, with the result that their position rapidly became untenable and had to be abandoned. Even Mr. Brough will agree that they failed to establish a new system of society.

On the contrary, they set free the middle-class or bourgeois element in Russia from the last relics of feudalism. They cleared the way for further capitalist development.

The collapse of the Tsarist administration under the strain of a world war was the result of the exhaustion of its resources due to antiquated methods of exploiting the workers. The Bolsheviks are substituting more up-to-date ones. Hence our lack of enthusiasm for the "good intentions" with which they commenced their administrative career.

The question as to whether they can be successfully imitated is one which becomes more and more an academic point as the excitement aroused by their example dies away. This much, however, is obvious, that the ruling powers of this country having taken care to organise the workers politically in their support, by means of the franchise, are not likely to meet with a débâcle on the Russian model. Their methods of dealing with would-be "leaders" of the discontented workers does not encourage us to believe that they would readily succumb even under such circumstances as those assumed by Mr. Brough. They are not afraid, for example, to allow "safe" leaders to assume nominal control of the political machinery.

Hence Labour Governments!

What Mr. Brough overlooks is that poli-

tical power is only controllable by a *class* organised for that purpose. When the Bolsheviks, for example, discovered their fatal mistake, they had no alternative but to fall back upon the support of the very bureaucracy, intelligentsia and petit bourgeois which they had aspired to dislodge; and, in the unlikely event of an analogous occurrence in Britain a similar result would follow. Finding that the workers as a class were not prepared to assert themselves, the capitalist class would resist the upstart minority and compel it to come to terms.

In the meantime the Socialist Party acts in accordance with existing circumstances. While the "Communists" and people like Mr. Brough scan the horizon anxiously for signs of an imaginary "revolutionary situation," we proceed with our educational work knowing that the changes taking place in our environment are with us. It is significant that neither of our correspondent's quotations help his case. Despite Mr. Shaw's distrust of "a bloodless victory through the ballot-box," the Fabian Society have not, so far, attempted anything else! Triden's remarks, on the other hand, indicate a conviction that the "masses" *will* move, but do not answer the question "what shape will the movement take?"

Mr. Brough says, "our desires must not blind us to things as they are!" Yet in his desire to have something done quickly he is prepared to blind himself to the fact that experience is a relentless educative force and, strange though it may seem, a more powerful one than even the capitalist press.

Ed., Com.

### READING.

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## DEMOCRACY AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE.

Ever since the Bolshevik's coup of 1917, the idea has been widely fostered by their would-be imitators that "democracy" is nothing but a bourgeois snare and a delusion. In the mouths of these so-called Communists, however, the term has meant nothing more than the sham article offered to the workers by the political parties which trade upon delusions.

Conservative, Liberal and "Labour" politicians have all paid lip-service to the popular will and have just as readily ignored it and resorted to the use of force whenever it has suited their purpose. The war of 1914-1918 was a glaring example of the contempt which these leaders of the people entertain for their followers.

The Communists, however, while indulging in fiery denunciation of "sober," "respectable," "eminently practical," "legal," "Parliamentary," opportunism, have not offered, as an alternative, anything more satisfying than a crazy and erratic opportunism which exaggerates the importance of industrial action, and regards a street-fight as a revolution. They invite the workers to jump out of the frying-pan into the fire.

The Socialist Party insists upon the necessity for the education and organisation of the workers on the basis of the class struggle and this involves a constant loyalty to democratic methods. This necessity follows logically from its object, i.e., "Socialism."

The workers can only acquire possession in common of the means of life by conscious collective action, and they can only exercise control thereof when they are prepared to assert themselves as a class.

The Socialist Party, therefore, opposes, not only the orthodox capitalist parties (Liberal and Tory) but the so-called Right and Left Wings of the alleged "Labour" movement.

The "Right Wing" professes to be able to use the political machinery in the interests of the workers without first having laid the foundations of political triumph in a clear understanding of its objects and conditions.

Instead of imparting to the workers a sound knowledge of their position in capitalist society, it simply accepts the illusions already prevalent and plays up to them for the purpose of catching votes.

Thus the workers imagine themselves to be free citizens, payers of rates and taxes

with an interest in the day-to-day administration of capitalist society; and the Labour politicians thereupon adopt programmes of reforms based upon the alleged necessity of "economy" or "wise expenditure." Their policy presupposes the continued existence of capitalism, and they can, therefore, be nothing more than the tools of capitalist interests, no matter what their motives or intentions may be.

The Left Wing trades upon the repeated disappointment of the workers with their official political leaders. Every act of treachery, every blunder into the enemy's hands is hailed by the Left as a reason for a change of leadership; yet, in practice, the leaders of the Left never fail to follow in the footsteps of those whom they displace. The industrial leader seizes the first opportunity to set his foot upon the loftier ladder of political ambition; the Left is thus continually melting into the Right.

This is inevitable, for the simple reason that the policy of "industrial action," as such, is as barren of benefit to the workers as that of parliamentary reform. The existing Trades Unions are quite incapable of effectively meeting the continual encroachments of modern capitalism upon the workers' standard of life. Nothing less than a complete change of outlook and re-organisation of the working-class can convert a chaotic retreat into an orderly advance.

This, however, implies Socialist education; and the leaders of the Left are as loath as those of the Right to undertake this slow and arduous task. It is easier to make showy promises, to tickle the ears of the workers with flattery, and to occupy their attention with personalities rather than with principles.

The Socialist, however, knows and proclaims that conditions and not leaders give rise to movements. So long as the workers see no further than the effects of capitalism and aspire no higher than to battle with those effects, just so long will they trust in leaders to guide them. The underlying causes of poverty, however, become more obvious as time goes on. Increasing numbers of workers are beginning to realise that the ownership of the means of life is the central factor in their common problems, and the leaders of to-day have a less easy task than their predecessors had to arrest the onward march of working-class knowledge. That is the principal reason for the palpable divisions among those leaders, and

the constant danger of internal break-up which is characteristic of the "Labour Movement."

The industrial and political organisation of the workers does not arise from an idea fallen from the clouds. The Trades Unions originated in the first early struggles of the factory-hands to prevent themselves being reduced to a level from which they could never hope to rise. They were the instinctive defence against capitalist aggression; but these working-class pioneers were early forced to see that they were obliged to take into account a greater power than the individual capitalist. At every turn they were met by the actions of the Government, the agent of the master-class as a whole. For years they were engaged in a bitter struggle to secure their unions from legal extinction. Hence they saw the necessity for political power, and supported the Chartist Movement, which aimed at the obliteration of class-distinctions in the political field.

The original connection between democracy and the class struggle is thus plain. Just as bureaucracy in all its forms exists only to preserve capitalist interests, so democracy is the logical political expression of working-class interests.

This is in no way altered by the fact that the franchise was conceded by the master-class to serve their own ends. The concession merely indicates that at the present stage of industrial development power lies, in the last resort, at the disposal of the workers. So long as the workers lack the necessary organisation, the masters will utilise their support; but from the workers' point of view, the franchise has only one meaning. It is the instrument of emancipation. As such, the most enlightened of the Chartists regarded it, and the Socialist merely preserves the lessons of experience, keeping in line with the historical development of the working-class.

The pioneers who penned the "Communist Manifesto," took the same view. "The bourgeoisie itself . . . furnishes the proletariat with weapons for fighting the bourgeoisie" (page 14). "All the previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interests of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority in the interest of the majority" (page 15).

"The first step in the revolution by the

working-class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the battle of democracy." "The proletariat will use its political supremacy to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e., of the working-class organised as the ruling class" (page 21).

Similarly, Marx, in "Value, Price and Profit," refers to the fact that "This very necessity for general political action affords proof that in its merely economic action capital is the stronger side" (page 50), while Engels again, in "Socialism; Utopian and Scientific," advances the proposition that "The proletariat seizes the public power, and by means of this transforms the socialised means of production into public property." To thoroughly comprehend the historical conditions and, thus, the very nature of this act, to impart to the now oppressed proletarian class a full knowledge of the conditions and of the meaning of the momentous act it is called upon to accomplish, this is the task of the theoretical expression of the proletarian movement, scientific Socialism" (pages 86-87).

To this task we of the Socialist Party have set our hands. Others may attempt to lead the half-awakening mass back into the camp of the enemy, or to lure them, unprepared, to the shambles. The Socialist Party avoids both the Scylla of the vote-catching reformer on the one hand, and the Charybdis of the minority movement fanatic on the other hand.

We seek to instil into the minds of the members of our class the facts that they are slaves needing emancipation, and that they may achieve it when they will by using the powers lying to their hands. Thus, for us, democracy is not something which resides all ready in a bourgeois Parliament. On the contrary, it can spring into life only with the conscious self-assertion of the working-class majority having for its object the emancipation of all mankind through the abolition of the private ownership of the means of life.

E. B.

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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



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[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## THE STRUGGLE FOR WORLD TRADE.

Those members of the ruling class who have some understanding of the real nature of modern economic and political problems and are able to take broad views outside the narrow range of the professional politician, are not very numerous and seem fated to do most of their thinking after it has ceased to matter what they think. They discover the cause of the leak after the ship has gone to Davy Jones' locker. The "Round Table" (June, 1926, page 478) has made the discovery that the Great War was, in the words used by a famous diplomat in another connection, "worse than a crime, it was a mistake." The capitalist governments which went to war in 1914 for the dominance of Europe did so on the assumption that Europe was still "the undisputed centre of the world's trade, the world's finance, and the world's military and industrial power." Their mistake was in having overlooked the fact that that European supremacy was already being challenged. Had they been wise and realised this in time, "The Great War would probably never have been fought. . . ." While the allied and the central European capitalists were at war, the spoil for which they sent their conscript workers to fight passed out of the reach of both groups. America in the meantime has become a capitalist power of almost as much importance as the whole of Europe together, and other powers have also grown to an extent which threatens the basis on which West European capitalism rests.

"Fifty years ago there was no continent which was not economically dependent on Europe. To-day not only is North America completely emancipated, but she has actually become the universal creditor

of Europe. . . . In Asia the war has given birth to a national consciousness in Russia, India, China and Turkey, which is giving them new powers of resistance to European control. Fifty years ago her peoples were the passive purveyors and purchasers who made the Eastern market the source of so much European wealth, but now they, too, are building their own factories, in which they are manufacturing goods for their own needs instead of buying them from Europe—and they are doing it largely with the aid of European machinery and European capital."

The "Round Table" then goes on to give figures illustrating the economic basis of the new America:—

"In 1913 the average monthly production of hard coal in the United States was 43,088,000 tons, as against continental Europe's 23,243,000 tons. In 1925 the disproportion had increased to 44,231,000 tons, as against 22,131,000 tons. . . . In regard to pig-iron the difference is even more striking. In 1913 the United States produced 2,601,000 metric tons per month, as against Europe's 2,514,000 tons, but in 1925 the American monthly output had risen to 3,082,000 tons, while Europe's had fallen to 2,143,000 tons. In crude steel the story is the same. . . . Even in the matter of shipping an alteration in the balance may be found. . . . In whatever direction one looks at the statistics, they point to a similar result. Although her population is only about two-fifths of that of Europe, the United States produces more maize, oats and cattle than all the countries of Europe (excluding Russia, Great Britain and Ireland) put together, to say nothing of cotton, oil and copper."



Then there is Japan, whose capitalists also found in the war between their European commercial rivals (both allied and enemy) a heaven-sent opportunity. The "Osaka Mainichi" in an "Overseas Expansion Number" (May 30th, 1926) analyses Japanese foreign trade over a series of years, in an article headed "European War, The Turning Point of Japan's Foreign Trade Prospects." While European manufacturers were busy with munitions, "Japan's export trade suddenly increased to an enormous figure." There was, of course, a temporary slump after the war owing to Japanese over-development and to the revival of manufacture in Europe, but again Japanese trade is developing rapidly, while the capitalists of Great Britain have had to face a long-continued decline. It is interesting to notice, too, that Japan is passing through the normal stages of capitalist evolution, "in the past, coarse manufactures and raw material occupied the leading position, but now the tendency of the trade is in manufactured goods. . . . Industry has developed into machine industry." Exports since 1913 have increased nearly four times in value, and the more recent rapid growth has taken place particularly in some of Britain's best markets, India, China, and Egypt.

The "Round Table" writer, having shown the extent to which the position of the British capitalists and those of Europe generally has worsened, then goes on to discuss possible remedies. The case is not quite beyond hope; the ship may, he thinks, be raised from the bottom of the sea. Great Britain is too small to stand alone, but she may yet hold her own either by throwing in her lot with the European nations, or by reorganising the British Empire on a stronger, more exclusive basis.

We are not concerned with the question as to which of these alternatives should be chosen by the ruling class of Great Britain. It is, however, necessary that we should be aware of the economic developments going on in the capitalist world, and that we should take note of possible regroupings on the lines discussed in the Round Table, especially as the question is presented in a way which deceives many workers into confusing other peoples' interests with their own.

Already there are numerous international

trusts and cartels in existence: for dyes, for shipping, for steel rails and other steel products, and an international coal association has lately been much talked of. The Federation of German Industry has expressed its favourable attitude towards a "European Customs Union" (page 491), and the whole of this field is to be covered by the forthcoming World Economic Conference of the League of Nations. On the other side there has never been a lack of advocates of the establishment of a British Empire customs union against the rest of the world. A serious feature is that these schemes have no difficulty in attracting the support of labour leaders and so-called working-class organisations. The attitude of the British Labour Party in support of the Empire idea is, of course, well-known. Within their ranks, however, in the self-styled left wing, the I.L.P., there is already a definite tendency to maintain, in opposition to the official view, an old-fashioned liberal attitude favouring the formation of closer relations with the continental governments. This they are pleased to call being "good Europeans." The Social Democratic Federation in Great Britain has for a year or two advocated the "United States of Europe." In March of this year there took place in Brussels a meeting between well-known labour M.P.s of Belgium, France and Germany, which adopted the following resolution ("Round Table"):

"The economic interdependence and interpenetration of nations proves the necessity for commercial agreements which will familiarise the peoples with the idea of a European Customs Union as a factor in a general scheme of international economics."

We have Mr. Pugh, of the T.U.C. General Council supporting the international steel rail cartel (*Daily Herald*, March 26th), and Mr. Hodges proposing a similar association for the coal trade. According to the "Christian Science Monitor" (June 12th), the Austrian Social Democrats, through their official paper, the "Arbeiter Zeitung," are urging the workers of Austria and Germany to work for a scheme of European federation, in spite of its capitalist origin and capitalist backers.

There are two main arguments used in support of these various plans to federate Europe, or develop the British Empire, or link up all the States of North and South

America under the leadership of the U.S.A. First, it is said that "prosperity" can be obtained through the increase of trade which would result, and, secondly, that this is a way to prevent war. In defining the Socialist attitude (that is, the attitude which is in accordance with the interests of the working class), we have, therefore, to consider these two points.

First, what is prosperity? The "Osaka Mainichi," quoted above, states that "Japan's cotton industry is prosperous." To prove the existence of prosperity, it shows that the employers have plenty of orders, are extending their plant, and finally that their reserves set aside out of profits amount to a very large sum. The cotton workers are not even mentioned. In fact, their conditions are so bad that the Indian manufacturers, whose workers are treated abominably, maintain that conditions in Japan are worse, and that this enables the Japanese exporters to India to undercut Indian textile products. "Prosperity," whether measured in profits, or the amount of foreign trade, or the total amount of wealth production, or the amount of property owned by some sections of the population, is no guide whatever to the condition of the workers under capitalism. "Prosperity" does not mean prosperity for them. The recent large profits made by margarine companies have been ascribed, no doubt correctly, to the general depression and the general low wages among the workers (*Observer*, June 27th). As the worker's standard of living falls, he is less and less able to afford butter. His poverty produces prosperity for shareholders in margarine companies. The actual growth of the powers of the human race to produce wealth is still less an indication of the factors which improve the position of the workers. At the present moment there is depression in the coal industry, not only in Great Britain, but in almost every coal-producing country in the world. That depression is admittedly due to the fact that more coal is being produced than is required, and the falling demand for coal is in turn largely due to the discovery of better and cheaper ways of providing for fuel requirements. In other words, miners are everywhere threatened with increasing unemployment and lowered wages because the world has learned how to produce the same amount of power in a new way with the expenditure of less labour. The human

race has become potentially richer, but, owing to the present organisation of society, great masses of workers are becoming actually poorer because of that improvement in the means of producing wealth.

Those means of wealth production in every capitalist country (including industrial Russia) are not owned and operated by the whole of society for the needs of society. They are owned almost exclusively by a numerically small class of property owners, and their use is not governed by human need for food and other necessities and comforts of life, but by the condition of the market. Goods are produced for sale, and if sales decline so does production, although needs may be greater than ever. The cutting down of production means greater unemployment for the workers, and an increase in their poverty; but even if for short and exceptional periods capitalism in some part of the world does manage to find employment for all its workers, they do not on that account cease to be poor. The prosperity which such a condition spells for the shareholder, for the "industry," and for the "nation" does not extend to the workers. There still remains on the one hand a class of wealthy persons living on income derived from the ownership of some form of property, and on the other the workers without any property worth mentioning. The private property system still permits the workers to be robbed of a large share of the wealth they have produced, and compels great numbers of them to be engaged in non-productive labour, essential only to capitalism.

And the evil does not stop there. Production for sale as inevitably produces war as it does working class poverty. Each capitalist or group of capitalists, whether in one country or combining several countries, comes into unavoidable conflict with rival interests. To realise his profit each must sell his goods; but demand is never great enough to absorb the whole mass of goods offered for sale. Productivity is always growing, but the amount the workers can purchase with their wages remains more or less the same absolutely, while in proportion to the total wealth produced it becomes relatively less. At the same time the luxury demands of the rich fail to increase sufficiently quickly to dispose of this ever-growing surplus.

The result is a competition for markets and a constant effort to cheapen the costs



of production and undersell competitors. This constant effort hits the workers when it takes the form of an all-round intensification of working conditions aimed at increasing the output of the worker, and in another direction it leads capitalist interests and the governments behind them to seek to monopolise supplies of raw material in different quarters of the globe. This in turn leads, through the clash of national policies, to the extension of navies and air forces in order to "protect" trade routes, monopolised markets, and sources of raw material. When the tension becomes too great, and when the bluff of diplomats and governments has reached its limits and they have no alternative but to translate their threats into action, we have war. For some 20 years before 1914 such a struggle had been going on between the British capitalists who had been dominant, and the German capitalists, who had to choose either to challenge that dominance or consent to yield up the glittering prizes which are to be won by the victorious group of exploiters of the working class. German goods and British goods competed in every market. German aims clashed with British aims in Africa, Turkey, Persia, and China. The German Navy was built by the German exploiters to challenge the position of the British members of their class. The pre-war conflict was fought with many weapons and under many guises before it came to open warfare, but capitalist trade was at the back of it all. As Tiertz always maintained, "it was the competition not of ships but of goods which changed the political face of Europe." (Gooch. History of Modern Europe, page 227.)

The competition of goods may again change, is already changing the political face not only of Europe but of the world; and again it will not fail to produce war. The formation of the United States of Europe may link together lately hostile capitalist interests, but only for purposes of commercial conflict, and with the greater certainty of an eventual appeal to arms against Pan-America, the British Empire or some other great federation of capitalist powers. Japan is already actively invading the markets of the European states, India, China, Russia, are all on the way to becoming new and aggressive participants in this mad scramble. Where will Pan-Europe sell her goods and what will she do when the world again becomes too small to hold

all the first class powers? Our labour supporters of these various rival schemes are silent on these points. What will happen at the not far distant date when the U.S.A. feels the really urgent pressure to dispose of her surplus abroad? That date has been delayed by various accidental conditions, and by devices such as the present extravagant development of instalment selling, which cannot solve the ultimate problem. It is in effect nothing but the anticipation of next year's home demand for goods. When it breaks, as Mr. Ford is already confident that it soon will, the need to find markets for greatly extended production will be only the more acute because of the postponement. According to Alvin E. Dodd, of the U.S.A. Chamber of Commerce already the "absorption of surplus production presents one of the outstanding difficulties of the American manufacturer." Production since 1913 has, he says, grown by 30 per cent., while population has grown by only 16 per cent. The problem now arises as to how to find a "Demand for the oversupply." (*Christian Science Monitor*, 18th June.)

War is not caused by the wickedness or the greed of capitalists. It is the outcome of policies they are compelled to adopt by the forces at work in the capitalist system. Federating capitalist States into even larger groups can only extend the area of war, it cannot abolish it.

The interests of the workers require that they should resolutely refuse to be drawn into any one of these schemes. It follows no less plainly that they should oppose, as does the Socialist Party, all persons and organisations which advocate the contrary anti-working class policy, even though they masquerade as "labour" parties.

These organisations are urging policies which suit the interests of some section of the capitalist class in their respective countries. The American Federation of Labour, acting behind the convenient screen of the Pan-American Federation, is helping U.S.A. capitalist trade and capitalist finance to extend their hold over Central and South America. Our own Labour Party, with its tender regard for the needs of the Empire, is the tool in effect of one British capitalist group, as the I.L.P. is of another. The communists are in matters of foreign policy the unconscious (and it must be added the very inefficient) tools of Russia. The Australian Labour Party with its pas-

sion for the exclusion of Japs and other non-white races and its general advocacy of navalism and militarism, and the Labour Party of South Africa with its futile anti-native attitude are tarred with the same capitalist brush. That these parties act in the way they do has little or no connection with the merits or demerits of their respective leaders. As these, like their members, are not socialist, but have rejected the socialist contention that the prime, almost the only present aim worth consideration by the workers, is the abolition of private property in the means of wealth production, they must cling to their present policies or give way to blank despair. As we have so often insisted there is only one way of administering capitalism—the capitalist way. This remains just as true even although the capitalists or the Labour Parties may change the form of the system and retain the exploitation which is its essence under the name of state capitalism or nationalisation. Whatever the views and wishes and beliefs of those who administer capitalism, even if as in Russia they happen to be communists, the pressure of economic forces will compel certain policies to be followed, capitalist policies which presuppose working class poverty and lead to war.

Just as Czarist Russia was in repeated conflict with Austria over the control of Balkan territory and ways of communication, and with Great Britain over the Near and Middle East, so Russia to-day is "claiming" Bessarabia from Rumania and trying, through the clash of Rumanian and Italian capitalist interests, to bring Mussolini's government into the scale against Rumania. Mr. W. N. Ewer, Foreign Editor of the *Daily Herald*, summed the position up well in a lecture on "Continuity in Foreign Policy," reported in *Foreign Affairs* (July 1926). He mentions this ancient Russo-British conflict of interests and adds:—

"The struggle was inevitable. If we obeyed those laws which had moulded our policy in the past we were bound to oppose Russia, or anybody else who hindered us in our gentle work of colonial expansion and exploitation. This was the fundamental continuity in our policy, and the only way to discontinue that policy was by a complete break with our previous economic policy. In 1924 the Labour Govern-

ment had been bound to take the same course as any other government, as had been evinced by our attitude then to Russia, Egypt and Irak. No blame could be attached to anyone for this, so long as we intended to go on being an economic imperialist power. Reformism in diplomacy was impossible for it simply meant the acceptance of the other side's principles. The only way out was by the abandonment of empire and exploitation. We could not have the best of both worlds."

We would only correct that last sentence by pointing out that Mr. Ewer, who condemns exploitation and "continuity" and at the same time supports the Labour Party, has apparently found out how to make the best of both worlds. But those who really wish to avoid those policies must join us in fighting for Socialism and against all the defenders of capitalism, including Mr. Ewer's party.

H.

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### BIRDS OF A FEATHER.

The recent Labour Government took office as a gift from the Liberal Party. Their short term of "power," with its attendant rewards, no doubt whetted the appetite of these Labour Leaders.

Philip Snowden, in an article published in *Reynolds*, June 6th, exhibits a hunger that is ravenous, and a contempt for the minds of his followers that is surprising, even in a Labour Leader.

"The Coalition," he claims, "Justified the contention of the Labour Party that in all fundamental matters of economic and social reform there was little or no difference between the Liberal Leaders and the Conservatives."

Bear in mind for the present that Lloyd George was the leading light in the Coalition that justified the contention of the Labour Party that there was no fundamental difference between Liberal and Conservative. And of "disgusted genuine Liberals" Mr. Snowden says, "Many of these have gone over to the Labour Party, which they recognised has now become the inheritor of what was best in the Liberalism of the past."

From the time of Bright, the bitter opponent of the "Factory Acts," to Lord Featherstone Asquith, of conscription fame, and the Jingo Lloyd George, who led the workers, strictly in the figurative sense, through fields of waving bayonets, the history of the Liberal Party is one of direct opposition to working class interest. What was best in their bloody record Snowden does not say. However, the vile traditions of that Party does not disgrace the "inheritor."

After pointing out, "That there is a large amount of Liberal opinion and sentiment in the country, which is disorganised," this "Honourable Gentleman" asserts that "If any man can revive the fortunes of the Liberal Party, it is Mr. Lloyd George."

For what purpose should Lloyd George organise the Liberals he has not already "disgusted"?

Snowden answers: "Mr. Lloyd George knows that neither his magnetism nor his programme can ever revive the Liberal Party to the extent of giving the Party enough Members in Parliament to form a Government. He will have to depend upon the support of another party to carry out that programme."

"Co-operation with the Conservatives for such an object is out of the question. A Labour Government is the only possible alternative to the continuation in office of the Conservative Party. There is nothing in Mr. Lloyd George's programme which is in opposition to the Labour programme on these subjects."

"His only hope of achieving his land and coal and power scheme lies in helping a Labour Government to get back to office, and in co-operating with them in the House of Commons. There is no sacrifice of independence in co-operating for a common purpose."

That there is no sacrifice of independence is agreed, the guinea pig can't sacrifice its tail. There is also no loss of dignity in this cringing appeal to Lloyd George for support. Fortunately for Philip Snowden Labour Leaders are not troubled with such a thing as dignity. Although occasionally they attempt to stand on it, but with results equal to that obtained by the spectator who stands on a cigarette paper to improve his view.

Anxious that it should be clearly understood there is no difference between the Liberal and Labour Party Snowden again refers to Lloyd George, who, he says:—

"Will carry the vast bulk of the Liberals with him on a programme which as an immediately practical programme for the next reform Government is little different from the Labour programme."

The first point in Snowden's article is that there is no distinction between Liberal and Conservative. And the second point, that there is no difference in the Liberal and Labour Party. And so the question arises, what difference is there between the Labour and Conservative Party? And the answer, as Snowden shows, possibly without knowing it, is that this difference, like their independence, has no existence outside the imagination of the misguided followers of these Political Sharpers.

A comparison between statements of Lord Birkenhead and Philip Snowden will further emphasize this fact. The *Daily News*, June 23rd, reports the former as follows:—

"I would never give way to a claim that an industry which is not on an economic basis is entitled to a subsidy when there are many members of the community working longer hours for a less remuneration."

And in the same issue, the *Daily News* reports Mr. Snowden, who speaking at a luncheon given by the American Chamber of Commerce at the Hotel Cecil, says:

"The Trade Union idea in the past and to a very great extent to-day—has been one of antagonism to the employers."

And so this antagonism is merely an idea and not the antagonism that is responsible for the existence of Trade Unions.

Having simplified matters by converting the class struggle into an idea, Snowden proceeds to comfort his "select" audience with soothing advice.

"We have got to change that," he says, "and we have got to get the workman to realise that they are partners in industry, and that the depression of industry hits them probably more than it hits the employers. And we have got to realise that any progressive expansion of industry will accrue proportionately to their benefit."

What a lot of difficult things Mr. Snowden has got to do. To end the antagonism between worker and employer would bring him up against the cause of that antagonism, that is the private ownership in the means of life, and to interfere in this direction would not be going the right way to persuade the Liberals to boot him back into office. To convince the worker hit by a depression, in the form of the sack, that he is a partner in the business will be a troublesome task, and the more so when he is hungry and can't even get a snack at the Hotel Cecil. And when the "progressive expansion of industry," with the introduction of improved machinery, etc., puts him outside the factory and a lever in the hands of the employer to lower the wages of those inside, the benefits of this expansion will want a lot of explaining.

"I would like to see, therefore," concludes Snowden, "The Trade Union policy changed in this respect, that the Trade Unions would not be merely concerned, regardless of the conditions of industry, in getting the highest possible wage they can screw out of industry, but rather helping to make industry thoroughly efficient so that the means will be there out of which the highest wages can be paid."

No doubt his audience echoed the desire to see such an ideal condition for employers. But apart from the empty drivel, there is the same lying implication in Snowden's remarks as there is in that of Birkenhead's,

viz., that the workers are poor, not because they are robbed, but because they do not produce sufficient wealth.

That the workers support an idle class in luxury, and that swarms of political and industrial vermin, non-producers, grow fat from the pickings that are the price of treachery, is sufficient answer to these insects that slander the workers.

But with an understanding of their class interest, the workers will be proof against the "magnetism" of the Lloyd George type and the pleading of the Snowden breed.

Knowing that their trouble is the lack of the wealth which they alone produce, and the only remedy, that they as a class shall own the tools and material used in its production, and as a result own the product, the workers will set themselves the task to overthrow the present owners—the capitalist class—by taking from them the only power they possess to maintain their position, that is the control of the armed forces, secured by persuading the workers to elect capitalist representatives into political office.

Armed with this knowledge the toilers will pass by the Labour dope in spite of the many attractions from the great Liberal showman, whose "Magnetism" draws gold better than iron. They will ignore the Communist Clown, who claims to perform wonders with an imitation red-hot poker. By united action the workers will secure political control and use the power it gives them to alter the foundation of society from private to common ownership of the things needed in the production and distribution of wealth.

E. L.

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**The Socialist Standard,**

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1926

### THE CRUSHING OF THE MINERS.

The miners' lock-out has lasted three months, during which every effort—political and economic—has been made to drive them back on the masters' terms. The employers know well the slender resources of the workers, and they are evidently waiting till hunger has scourged the miners enough to force them back. In the meantime the owners are selling their huge stock of coal and realising the profits from the coal stores so kindly prepared by the miners in the nine subsidy months. The demand for an embargo on coal is being continually made by miners, but, after the huge betrayal of the General Strike, such a step will not be taken. The Labour Leaders in Parliament have been doing the employers' work well, talking of "back to the Report," "the Samuel memorandum," "reorganisation," and such capitalist schemes with the reduced wages and "increased unemployment" that these things mean. The miners were prevailed upon to stop criticising the General Council and to "work together for victory," and on such empty words the joint meeting of trade union executives to hear the General Council's report was not held. But since then the great "left wing" leader—Mr. Bromley—has been very useful to the

masters by publishing parts of the "apologia" of the General Council. Mr. Bromley's words have been used all over the country by the mineowners to aid them in their work of crushing the miner. The reasons given by the Council for calling off the General Strike are the unyielding nature of the miners demands, but these very demands were the ones the General Council called the General Strike to maintain! Such are the gods of labour—right wing and left wing.

After backing the wrong horses for the General Council, boosting Messrs. Bromley, Tillett, Hicks and Company, the Communists again show their uselessness by demanding "A General Council with Greater Power," "A New Leadership" (Workers' Weekly, July 23rd, 1926). This, in spite of their idols of the left wing, proving to be enemies of the working class.

Left to fight alone for the miserable status quo of miners' wages and hours, the miners have all the powers—political, financial and economic—working against them.

The employers are not content to use their money power against the miner. They with their fellow property owners control the powers of Parliament—by means of workers' votes. The owners, therefore, pass Emergency Power Acts, Eight-hour Laws, Reorganisation Bills, and thus they cement their hold over the working class. The lesson then is plain—not a change of leaders—but control of political power by a working class understanding its historic mission of abolishing miners—and all other workers' slavery.

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## HENRY FORD OR KARL MARX?

In the *Sunday Observer* (11.7.26) Mr. J. L. Garvin wrote an article headed "Ford or Marx." The inspiration for the article was Norman Angell's book, "Must Britain Travel the Moscow Road," which professes to be a reply to Trotsky's book, "Where Britain is going."

Times out of number we have balanced accounts with the Russians, and incurred much odium by pointing out that Bolshevism was not Socialism, and that Bolshevik policy was entirely opposed to the principle set forth by Marx. But it pleases the opponents of the workers to confuse the two positions in order the better to resist the spread of Socialism.

For this purpose any stick is good enough. Mr. Garvin brings forward the once execrable, but now quite respectable, Bernard Shaw, and even the ghost of the honest and delightful old dreamer William Morris.

A single article is not sufficient to deal fully with the collection of false suggestions put forward by Mr. Garvin, so I will confine myself to a brief examination of one or two of his leading points.

The first point to clear up is the confusion between Bolshevik policy and the principles laid down by Marx.

Briefly the Bolshevik policy was as follows:—

The conversion of Russian industry from a culture that was overwhelmingly a backward peasant culture into a communistic culture at one bound, without the intervention of capitalist methods of organisation. The capture of power was to be accomplished by a small minority who were to lead the backward masses. Parliament was taboo and armed street risings the method of procedure. The providing of suitable "slogans" with which to play upon the emotions of the ignorant majority was an important part of the policy. The final futility of the Bolshevik programme has been amply proved by subsequent Russian history. The peasants were too backward to grasp the meaning of communism, and to get out of their own insular way of looking at things. A small group of quarrelling partners rule Russia at present, but are compelled to rule in accordance with the needs and wishes of the vast mass of the population—the backward peasants. It

is the peasant that, in the main, determines Bolshevik policy to-day, and will do so for a long time to come.

What was Marx's views on the above methods? In the preface to *Capital* he states in unequivocal language:

"One nation can and should learn from others. And even when a society has got upon the right track for the discovery of the natural laws of its movement. . . . it can neither clear by bold leaps, nor remove by legal enactments, the obstacles offered by the successive phases of its normal development. But it can shorten and lessen the birth-pangs." (*Capital*, Vol. 4, p. xix.)

Marx's collaborator, and "other self," Engels, stated, in the last thing he wrote, the introduction to "The Class Struggles in France," that:—

"The time is past for resolutions carried through by small minorities at the head of unconscious masses. When it gets to be a matter of the complete transformation of the social organisation, the masses themselves must participate, must understand what is at stake, and why they are to act. That much the history of the last fifty years has taught us. But so that the masses may understand what is to be done, long and persistent work is required, and it is this work that we are now performing with results that drive our enemies to despair."

The Bolsheviks took the leap, and have landed in a quagmire.

The above quotations on Marx's point of view are sufficient to dissociate it from Bolshevism.

The next point we come to is Mr. Garvin's statement that:—

"Mr. Shaw could do more than any man in Europe to destroy the antiquated Marxist superstition which hinders or paralyses the progress of labour on this side of the Atlantic."

Mr. Garvin gives us no information about this "superstition," nor does he point out how it hinders. This is a convenient method of arguing, as it knocks the object down without the trouble of hitting it.

Farther on he says:—

"Marx egregiously over-estimated the importance of manual labour by itself. The single person with the original idea is more important economically than the thousands of workers whose employment never would have existed if he had not created it. When Henry Ford in 1914 had the idea of a minimum wage of a pound a day for his workers with profit-sharing on a large scale—terms improved since then—he knocked the bottom out of abstract Marxism deduced from studies in the British Museum."

The opening sentence is false; the second



is a joke. Marx examined the way in which the wealth of capitalism (commodities) was produced and analysed the part played by capitalist and worker. Up to the present no one has been able to show any essential fault in this analysis, although hundreds of professors of political economy have attempted the task. In the course of his analysis Marx showed the respective places of the so-called "manual" and "mental" workers and demonstrated that each was a member of the working class, and had identical interests as opposed to the interests of capital. It has been a common charge against Marx that he ignored the so-called "intellectual" worker. The charge has been levelled by the professional intellectuals, who feel their importance acutely, and would like to think that they are in a class apart, and distinct, from the "common working man" and the wealthy idler. Many years ago Paul Lafargue, in his brilliant essay entitled "The Intellectuals," reduced their dignity to the level of carrots and potatoes.

Mr. Garvin, however, makes a variation, and puts Henry Ford among the band of economic giants. The argument is a joke.

Taking it at its face value Henry Ford introduced more economical methods of production. The result of improvement in methods is the production of a given quantity of goods with the employment of less workers, and the more rapid satisfaction of the demand for goods. Carried out on a sufficiently extensive scale this means that relatively fewer and fewer workers are required to meet the international demand for goods, an increase in the number of workers seeking jobs that have ceased to exist. The final El Dorado is a small number of workers enjoying high wages and producing all the world requires to meet its needs, and a vast number of workers without employment or the means to purchase the goods so lavishly produced! Not long ago Mr. Ford himself experienced the effect of his methods. So rapidly had motor cars been produced by his system that the market was glutted and he had to close down his works! A curious way of providing employment!

Another aspect of the question is given by the following quotation from the *American Appeal*, June 5th, 1926:—

"Labour's share of the automobile dollar is shrinking under large-scale mass production, as revealed in the United States census of manufac-

tures for 1925. These figures show that last year only 32.4 per cent. of the value created in the industry went to wages, compared with 40 per cent. in 1923 and 38.6 per cent. in 1919. In 1899, the first year in which automobile production appears in the census, the workers received 44.8 per cent. of the value they created.

"In 1925, according to the figures, automobile manufacturers received \$3,371,855,805 for their output, an increase of \$208,257,931 over 1923. Deducting the cost of materials leaves the actual value created by manufacture at \$1,168,868,466, an increase of \$153,003,944 over 1923. In 1925, however, those who actually produced the motor vehicles received only \$379,284,935, a decrease of \$27,445,343 from 1923. While employer receipts increased 15 per cent. in 2 years, labour's receipts for operating the industry decreased nearly 7 per cent." ("American Appeal," 5/6/1926.)

The above figures show clearly the object and result of the Ford method—more profit for the employers and less return to the workers for the energy they use up.

Mr. Garvin concludes his article with the statement that:—

"Karl Marx, the mid-Victorian Calvin of economics, is as dead as a dodo. That practical, original, Henry Ford—as the epoch-making symbol of high wages and profit-sharing—is the real spirit of the morning."

In the land in which Henry Ford is a financial king the Federal Trade Commission reports that:—

"One per cent. of the population of the United States owns 59 per cent. of the wealth.

"Thirteen per cent. of the population own 90 per cent. of the wealth.

"Eighty-seven per cent. of the population own 10 per cent. of the wealth." ("Labour," June 5th, 1926.)

So much for the land of high wages and profit sharing!

Finally the following quotation may help to dispel any delusion as to who benefits by the prosperity of Ford industries:—

"Last year's profits of the Ford Motor Company, which started business in 1903 with a capital of \$28,000, amounted to \$115,000,000, approximately £23,000,000, according to reports filed by the company yesterday.

"Only three persons, Mr. Ford, his wife, and his son, own the stock of the company. On the basis of the published figures it is estimated that every vehicle manufactured by the Ford works brings in a profit of 44.90 dollars (£9), to the shareholders." ("Daily News," 9th May, 1926.)

If Marx is "antiquated," and "is dead as the dodo," why all the excitement? We have been reading for years that he was "dead," but he seems to be a pretty lively corpse, and a pretty awkward one.

The facts are he ruthlessly exposed the groundwork of capitalism, and correctly foreshadowed the general methods of its

future development. The main propositions he laid down are as true, but more obvious, to-day, as when he wrote. The worker is poor because he is robbed of the product of his mental and manual labours. He is kept in a subject condition by a class that lives like a leech on his back. The means of subjection are the public coercive powers that are centred in Parliament. By preaching "brotherly love" between capitalist and workman the emissaries of the masters seek to disarm the worker's growing suspicions and induce him to send to Parliament representatives whose object is either to conserve the power of capital or to mislead and make futile any real attempts of the workers to remove wage-slavery.

When Mr. Garvin and Mr. Ford are as dead as a dodo the people of future generations will be celebrating the memory of one of the greatest thinkers of all times—Karl Marx.

GILMAC.

### "ANARCHIST FUNDAMENTALS."

We recently replied in these columns to a Deptford correspondent (Mr. Beer). He has since sent us a letter which would fill a page and a half of this journal. His rejoinder does not answer our objections to the so-called Anarchist case. We will briefly deal with Mr. Beer's "points."

He accuses us of favouring bureaucracy in spite of the fact shown by us that Socialism means a class-less society where wealth is owned in common, thus destroying the basis of bureaucracy.

Mr. Beer denies that physical force users and advocates are anarchists, and suggests that the persons who resort to individual violence are half-wits. Anarchism, he claims, deprecates violence. Every anarchist has his own definition of anarchism, and it is easy to dodge hard facts of anarchist history by saying that all the well known opponents of government were half-wits and not Anarchists. On the question of taxes, Mr. Beer claims that because the worker buys beer, tobacco, tea, etc., he therefore pays for government. The arguments advanced by us on this question are ignored, so we will again repeat that as the workers receive just enough to live upon (on the average) the working class cannot pay for governments. The cost of running the government machine comes out of the surplus stolen by the employers. Hence the property owners struggle to reduce tax-

ation. Taxes are the slightest element (if any) in prices. Prices are based in the ultimate upon the value of the articles, determined by the labour which is expended upon them.

Mr. Beer calls Socialism a huge monopoly but he carefully evades the point that it is a monopoly held by all the workers in common. A monopoly dictated by the needs of modern production and the failure of private ownership.

Mr. Beer talks of the products of labour going to the State under Socialism. He evidently does not know that the State is a machine arising from class ownership and private property, and therefore the State dies out with the death of property divisions. He again talks of the product of the individual's labour in spite of the co-operative nature of large scale industry. He confuses the measuring of the time spent by the individual worker with the result of his work merged into the associated labour.

Mr. Beer is no exception to the rule that Anarchists will not face the necessities of industrial evolution.

No Anarchist has yet attempted to explain how co-operative production demanded by modern machinery can be reconciled with individual ownership and control.

A. KOHN.

### KNOWLEDGE.

The following Books can be obtained from Head Office:—

**Anarchism and Socialism.** Plechanoff. 3/6, paper 1/2.

**Civil War in France.** Marx 2/9.

**Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844.**

Engels. 5/-

**Critique of Political Economy.** Marx. 6/6.

**18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon.** Marx. 3/6.

**Evolution of Property.** Lafargue. 3/6, limp 1/6.

**Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.** Engels. 3/6.

**Poverty of Philosophy.** Marx. 6/6.

**Revolution and Counter-Revolution.** Marx. 3/6,

limp 1/6.

**Social and Philosophical Studies.** Lafargue. 3/6.

**Socialism: Utopian and Scientific.** Engels. 3/6,

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W.C.I.



### THE M.C.H. AGAIN.

We call it the M.C.H., familiarly, and easily, because it does not seem such a mouthful as the Materialist Conception of History. Now the M.C.H. presents a difficulty to Mr. F. W. Wood, who writes us from Hackney, a difficulty of a quite peculiar kind. He asks us to publish his letter, and for the benefit of himself and numerous friends, requests our reply. We regret his letter is too diffuse to publish in its entirety, but his point can quite fairly be condensed into a short statement. Here follows the condensation. Mr. Wood has been a supporter of the Socialist Party for years. He thinks he can now claim he has a clear insight into the position of the S.P.G.B. With an unfortunate exception. It is this: He accepts the Materialist Conception of History in its entirety. He is a materialist first, last and all the time. But he finds he has to apply his "materialism" to capitalist society. He further finds that the working class at present seem determined to try the Labour and Communist route to the Promised Land, rather than ours. He agrees, the condition of the working class will get steadily worse, but deplores that the time when they will be compelled to take revolutionary action is inconceivably remote. This brings him to his main point. "If Socialism is still in the dim future, why should I spend time, money and energy in propagating and expounding Socialism, when I sincerely think I will never survive to see that new social order." Mr. Wood asks for a reply "free from vindictiveness," and not making a butt of him. He shall have it, though we are mildly curious as to why he should make such an observation: Does our journal strike anyone as vindictive? Perish the thought. Honest expression of opinion, and integrity of thought and motive, have nothing to fear but similar qualities from ourselves.

However, to get back to the difficulty. May we suggest, without vindictiveness of course, that our correspondent is a little at sea with his terms. He is a materialist, he says. What does that word mean, precisely? We have found it mean different things to different people. It is often used as a synonym for selfishness. It is often given a sinister twist by being coupled with "grossly"—grossly materialist. It is sometimes applied to a plain, matter-of-fact

individual who responds to no sentimental or idealist appeals. But these are all colloquial meanings. In philosophy it has a fairly definite meaning, but as Mr. Wood is not concerning himself with philosophy, that need not detain us. But a materialist in any of these senses need not necessarily subscribe to the M.C.H. We think it reasonably certain that Mr. Wood is using the term in the anti-sentimental sense, for he says, why should he give his time, money and energy to educating an unresponsive, inert, working class. There is only one reason, friend, and it is this: You will remember the famous cartoon depicting Ole Bill in a shellhole, up to his armpits in water, and the comforting remark of his pal in an adjoining shell-hole, "If you know of a better 'ole, go to it." The workers are up to their armpits in the slough of capitalism. We, who can see an inch or two farther than our fellows, tell them how they got into the mess, and how to get out of it. We show that they can only get out of it by united action, *as a class*. Here and there an individual may climb out by his own exertions, usually on the backs of his fellows, but for the working class to climb out by all becoming capitalists, is obviously absurd. If any individual thinks it a waste of time to urge his fellows to free themselves from slavery, knowing that his own freedom is bound up with theirs, he is quite at liberty to resign himself to his fate, and explain the matter to himself under any heading he pleases. Why not become a capitalist? If the workers won't move on their own behalf, climb on their backs. But remember there is only limited room. Every rich man means so many thousand poor. You can have a flock of sheep and one tiger, but you cannot have a flock of tigers and one sheep.

Let us hasten to assure Mr. Wood that we are not abstaining from becoming capitalists for purely sentimental reasons. If he can tell us of a fairly expeditious way—(we are past our first youth)—of taking our place with the captains of industry, we shall be delighted to hear of it. But, as a "materialist," surely he does not ask us to believe he is deliberately avoiding the pleasure of becoming a capitalist, whilst he sacrifices himself in the service of his fellow worker's enlightenment. Is it not rather the clear recognition that we, the working class, will never be anything else that irresistibly compels us to revolt.

We make that revolt intelligently and consciously, knowing the futility of any other course. We realise we can only revolt as a class, and we must organise as a class. We took the first steps by joining and organising a party to represent the aspirations of our class. If our fellows are dull, or deaf, they are damned, and so are we. We cannot rise without them.

One final word on the M.C.H. A materialist need not necessarily support the Materialist Conception of History. Quite often the contrary. Although at first sight a cumbrous title, it really stands for a very simple thing. History is the written record of the doings of mankind in the past. Thousands read it, few study it. Of the students some think they discern some driving motive or source of action that has driven society through its successive stages, to the present blissful epoch. Some would ascribe the major credit to the work of the Church, others to the wisdom of kings, some to the ability of statesmen, others to a succession of heroes and great men. The M.C.H., however, the supreme work of the genius of Marx and Engels, says that there is something greater than all these. The superstructure of society, it says; its laws and institutions are fundamentally based on the material conditions in that society. As Mr. Wood says, he has read the SOCIALIST STANDARD for years, he will readily recollect frequent articles on the subject, several quite recently, so there is no need to go over the ground again. Let him get away from the "superior person" attitude and the viewing of the working class as some entity which does not include ourselves. We are in it; we are of it; we *are* the working class. The only individual question we should permit ourselves is, "What am I doing about it?"

W. T. H.

### THE COMING INDOOR SEASON.

Our readers are invited to note that indoor Lectures will be commenced on Sunday, October 3rd, at the

Emily Davison Rooms,

144, High Holborn, W.C.1,

Detailed announcements will be given in next issue.

### FRESH MEAT!

The majority of our readers will doubtless recall how during the final stages of the "Great War to end War" (which has been more aptly than elegantly styled the "Bloody Swindle"), when the German "U" boats were disputing the sway of the British Ultra-hyper-super-extra-special-Dreadnoughts, there would appear to have been a shortage of food in the belligerent countries. The people here were at that time enjoined by flaming posters, and in other ways suitable to children, to Eat less Meat. Having in view this praiseworthy object, the chief articles of diet set aside for the consumption of the workers were various tasty, even if to some fastidious palates revolting, delicacies known officially and euphemistically as "edible offals."

A trite little axiom informs us that "One man's meat is another man's poison," so it may be permissible to accept the use of the term edible in relation to the delicacies afore-mentioned. While it is true that many patriotic members of the bourgeoisie were at times discovered to have hoarded sufficient food (not "edible offals") to provision a Labour Colony, knowledge is lacking as to the numbers of those who escaped detection at this laudable act of obedience to the "first law of Nature," or of those who were so fortunately placed as to be immune from the risk of detection. In fairness, however, it may be stated that the bourgeoisie but seldom availed themselves of their undoubted right to "line up" in the "queue"—that culminating evidence of capitalist organising genius—and, moreover, they generously conceded the monopoly of this romantic adventure to members of the working class. However, there is no doubt at all that at the time we have mentioned, as indeed, at all other times, the workers did not stint themselves of fresh meat—the ruling class saw to the stinting for them! In other words, those who saw to the stinting also very effectively determined the stinting! This shortage of meat was especially felt in France, as we shall see a little further on.

Now why is it that this delightful episode of war-time experience is once again obtruded before the notice of our readers? We will divulge the reason. The fact is we have just come upon a most piquant and illuminating passage in a newspaper which



seems to provide an answer to a problem which baffled the ingenuity of the (alleged) most able economists and historians (and we should think also the most adept amongst the habitués of "queues"! "Where did fresh meat go to in the warring time?" Apologising to those who detect the travesty of a parody of the lines in the modern classic, and requesting the reader to bear in mind this very intriguing question, we append for perusal the following extract from the *Daily Herald*, dated March 31st, 1926, viz.:-

**"SEND SOME FRESH MEAT INTO THE TRENCHES."**

"That was how a certain French General gave an order for a Reserve Battalion to take its place in the front line, according to M. Fonteny, President of the National Federation of Republican Comrades of the War. He makes this assertion in the course of an article in which he argues that the High Command was responsible for the mutinies in the French Army during 1917, about which very little was allowed to be published here.

"The General Staff, M. Fonteny declares, paid little heed to the sufferings and the risks undergone by the troops, and often kept units in the line until they had been reduced by half.

"This article is published on the front page of the *Quotidien*, one of the most widely-circulated organs of the Paris Press."

Send some fresh meat into the trenches!

What delicacy of expression! How beautifully terse and expressive! How naive! Here is a pleasing candour such as is seldom imparted even from the lips of politicians! Observe especially the absence of any sentimental stodge about heroes and saviours of civilisation! Evidently this good General, whether from lack of guile or from sheer mutton-headedness, believes in "speaking his mind"—though, perhaps, he may not lack the caution to speak it to those who can be trusted not to tell the soldiers his opinion of them! We cherish a fervent, if unwarranted, hope that the workers will note this new and dignified appellation conferred upon them by one of their cynical masters, and that they will compare the opinion so expressed with the plausible pretensions of goodwill towards them slobbered from the mouths of other members of the ruling class or their agents. In the piping times of peace and concord we unfailingly recognise our status as "hands," and on occasions we do not feel insulted at being lumped together as the "mob" or "canaille," or even, in the words of Bernard Shaw, as the "great unwashed." At election times, it

is true, our stature is perceptibly raised when we hear ourselves extolled as level-headed, hard-headed (not bone-headed), free and enlightened citizens, etc., etc., but elections, however important, occupy but a brief interlude in the affairs of life. Henceforth in the more piping times of war we may regard ourselves as being in the category of "fresh meat"!

The Socialist seldom strays into the misty and flatulent realms of conjecture, but on this occasion we feel justified in asking our readers to apply this General's description of his subordinates, who were also members of the working class, in relation to other incidents which occurred contemporary with, or immediately after, the "great war." Take, for example, the Recruiting campaign to induce workers to "join up" for the capitalist war. Who does not remember how the hoarding were beautiful with æsthetic proclamations bearing the interesting tidings that "Kitchener needs more men"? Surely better results would have accrued if something like the following had been perpetrated: "Bludger wants more fresh meat for the trenches"! After all, honesty is the best policy, and as a means for ending the war quickly we feel assured that this method could not be improved upon. Again, with regard to General Elections, how effective and inspiring would have been an appeal during the 1919 "Martial Law" Election to vote for those who would make the country "a land fit for fresh meat to live in!" Who could resist such a stirring appeal! But we fear that, although at times Generals and such like may be candid, the sentiments of politicians are more candied in their composition. Apropos, we could apply the method in relation to the rites and ceremonies performed over the "Unknown Warrior."

Now we will suppose that similar phraseology had been employed by some Socialist speaker or writer. What howls of wrath and execration would have assailed the ear-drums of humanity! A Texas lynching would comprise all the pleasures of a hashish debauch by comparison with the fate that would threaten such an odious and dispicable exponent of muck-raking! Even Dora with all her myrmidons of might and majesty might fail to vindicate her prerogative of bringing to book such an offender, and be relegated to a temporary position of inferiority during the

turbulent proceedings of mob "justice." But space vetoes further elaboration of this theme.

We doubt not that our apostles of the "brotherhood of man," our "Peace" snufflers, and our "League of Nations" enthusiasts will be able, through their inverted genius for detecting paradox, to find confirmation of the utility of their respective creeds in the words of the French General. For our part we find in them a vindication of the position in politics taken up by the Socialist Party, which has since its inception emphasised the reality of the class antagonism that exists in modern society.

Let us revert once again to that matchless sentence of the anonymous General, to whom history has denied the notoriety accorded to a kindred spirit—General Gallifet: "Send some fresh meat into the trenches." Urgent and imperative is the need for fresh meat! The little machine-gun bullets are whining; the big "five-nines" and the hungry "nine-tvos" are roaring for sustenance! Send more fresh meat into the trenches! The quality of the meat deteriorates and must be sent back continually to be "doctored" so that it may become fresh meat again. When the supply is consumed more and more fresh meat must be forthcoming for the feast of Moloch! Scour the parched plains of wasted Africa and the innermost recesses of the jungles of Senegal! Tear the bewildered peasant from his paltry plough! Hale the "apache" from his foetid den! "Comb-out"—like vermin!—the workers from the factories, workshops, mills, mines, and offices! Send along the halt, the maimed, the blind, and the witless! Empty the gaols of their rightful inmates! Send the widow's only son and the stripling torn from his mother's arms! In the sacred name of capital, whose commands must be obeyed! Should the fresh meat prove to be too "fresh" and inclined to murmur at the prospect of being too speedily devoured, then cannot some good English meat be procured for a Barmecide (or Bemersyde?) feast at Passchendaele?

And when the butchery is over? The rival master butchers can then retire from business borne down by the weight of swag and swagger. Quaffing from loving cups is now in order. The joy-bells ring—hey, ting-a-ling, and the fresh meat on hand can be put back into cold storage until such

time as another boom overtakes the meat market.

It is often repeated that "familiarity breeds contempt." This can be understood with respect to the ruling class, who have certainly had long acquaintance with the slave minds of the workers. But cannot it be said that the workers are equally familiar with loathsome conditions of poverty and servitude, and with the gross mismanagement of society by their masters, the capitalist class? When will their too-prolonged familiarity with the latter find expression? Only when Socialism has breathed into the mere meat its life-awakening purpose and endowed it with the knowledge of its own invincibility. Then will the resultant giant arise and calmly survey his puny enemies. To such as our General he will cry exultantly, "Muck, the broom awaits you!" One flick and the path is clear! Then onwards to the goal of the Classless Republic, wherein all who aid in producing wealth may enjoy without hindrance the entire bounty of the earth. The road that must be trod is the political road—for political power is the essential power.

W. J.

"The silly Marxist doctrine of the antagonism of Capital and Labour must be packed up and buried in the grave of its foolish inventor. Capital and Labour are not mutually antagonistic.—*Daily Express*, 18/5/26.

No, no; of course not! Why all this silly bother, this needless exhibition of force and strife? They love one another, adore each other. Certainly "they" shall have all the wealth and the leisure, and "we" shall have all the work and subsistence wages. Then "us" shall live happy ever after—perhaps.

MAC.

**NEW BRANCH.**

A new branch has been formed at Paddington. Sympathisers and prospective members should get in touch with A. W. PASS, 110, Bravington Road, Paddington.

**S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS**  
LONDON DISTRICT.

**Sundays:** Finsbury Park, 3 p.m.  
Clapham Common, 3 p.m.  
Tottenham, West Green Corner, 7.30 p.m.  
Victoria Park, 11.30 a.m.

**Mondays:** Clerkenwell, Garsault Place, 8 p.m.  
Islington, Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.  
Wood Green, Jolly Butchers Hill, 8 p.m.

**Thursdays:** Hackney, Queens Road, Dalston, 8 p.m.

**Fridays:** Clerkenwell, Garsault Place, 8 p.m.

**Fridays:** West Ham, Water Lane, Stratford, 7.30 p.m.  
Leyton, Church Rd, Markhouse Rd, 7.30 p.m.



**SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road. Discussion last Thursday in month. Open to all.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Communications to E. Jesper, 74, Murdoch-rd., Birmingham. Branch meets A.E.U. Institute, Spicel-st., every Saturday.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to A. Jacobs, Sec., 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Andrew Porter, 12a, Kings-rd., Portobello.

**GLASGOW.**—Communications to Sec., J. Higgins, 816, Rutherglen-rd., Oatlands, Glasgow.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Saturdays, 7 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare Street, Hackney. Discussions after Branch Business. Communications to Secretary at above address.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock St., Hanley, Staffs. Open to all.

**HULL.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Tuesday in the month at The Institute, Co-operative Society, Ltd., Albion Street, Hull. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to W. Baker, 35 Alma-st., Kentish Town, N.W.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.

**SOUTHEAST-ON-SEA.**—Communications to Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Sec., A. Yeomans, 15, University-rd., Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 17, Antil-road, Broad Lane, Tottenham, N.17. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce-grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to S. E. Williams, 85, Park-road, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Thursdays at 8.30 p.m. No. 1 Room, Labour Club, Clarendon Road.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

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## A LAND OF "NO CLASS WAR."

### THE DREAM OF DEAN INGE.

The Newspaper Press has lately been flooded with articles by prominent pillars of the Church upon social questions. Not only do these articles bring material reward to their "spiritual" authors, but they perform a valuable service to the ruling class. That still large element of workers saturated with religion are inclined to be guided by the clergy and hence the clerics are hired to sing the praises of the present system of society.

One of the busiest writers in defence of Capital is Dean Inge of St. Paul's Cathedral. In an article in the *Evening Standard* (August 26th) illuminated by his photo, he discourses on "The Class War." The gloomy dean has become very optimistic about the Kingdom of Capital, in fact, more hopeful than he is about the "Kingdom of God." This "cultured" cleric, who spent twenty years of his life studying the mystics of the ancient World, has spent about twenty minutes studying Socialism, and hence miles of articles denouncing "the horrid thing."

Let us hear the brilliant words of the very reverend divine:

All who are interested in social questions—and who can escape from these painful problems?—should study the conditions in America, for there we have an alternative to Socialism in working order. Two results have followed. There is, as I was assured last year when I visited America, very little Socialism there now, because every working man is himself a capitalist. That is one result; the other is that no country has ever been half so prosperous as the United States is to-day.

Notice his discovery on his brief lecturing tour in America. He discovered or "was assured," that every working-man is himself a capitalist."

Just previously, we are given the reason

for this amazing example of an Eldorado. We will again quote the Dean:—

The fact is, simply, that while Europe has been following various will-o'-the-wisps which are usually described collectively as Socialism, America has adhered to the economic creed of the Benthamite Radicals and the Victorian Liberals. Bentham, for example, said that "if the laws do nothing to combat it, if they put no shackles on industry and trade, in a prosperous nation there is a continual progress to equality." Marx said the exact opposite—that the natural progress under "capitalism" is towards a nation of millionaires and beggars. Mill's remedy for unrest was to turn labourers into capitalists, which is easily done in a joint-stock limited company, though it is not so easy in a private firm.

The much-abused economists of 80 years ago have now been proved to be right, while every prophecy of the Socialists has been completely falsified, and every one of their schemes, as soon as it has been tried, has been proved to be unworkable.

"The continual progress to equality" is a fine phrase. While it may be true of the dead—the special field of the Dean—it certainly is not true of America. Not only so, but America is the country, par excellence, where the gulf between the worker and the owner gets wider every day.

If figures are required, they have been marshalled in many books, and our new pamphlet on Socialism quotes some of them. The actual income-tax returns of the United States showed that even with assessing the tax on incomes of over £200 per year for single persons, only a minority came within the tax. That figure of two hundred pounds or 1,000 dollars annual income in America meant a very low standard of existence.

America, the land of "no class war" is actually the country used as an illustration by many anti-Socialist writers of the truth



of Marx's prophecy of the concentration of wealth.

Since the millionaire, Henry Laurens Call, wrote his statement of "The Concentration of Wealth," there have been many proofs of the truth of Marx's prophecy applied to America. The most carefully selected body ever convened by the United States Senate to study Industrial Relations reported that 2 per cent. of the population owned 60 per cent. of the wealth. (Report of Industrial Relations Committee, 1916.)

The country of the most brutal and bloody suppression of striking workers is chosen by the Dean as a country without a class war! Recent industrial history in the United States shows a record of textile workers in Patterson (New Jersey), striking for a bare existence; the millworkers of New England, the metal miners of Minnesota, the mine workers of Virginia, the steel toilers of Pennsylvania and Indiana—a whole series of struggles brutally suppressed and with starvation driving the workers back to work.

Read the almost suppressed report of the Inter-Church World Movement upon the Steel Strike! A report made by Church investigators which showed the terrible conditions of the steel workers that caused the strike and the bloody methods used in its suppression. Does the Dean of St. Paul's tell his readers of horrible steel towns like Johnstown, Pennsylvania, where over 200 out of every thousand born die in their first year?

Our Dean, who writes of America's every working-man a capitalist, seems to doubt his own statement, for we read the following little qualification of his Eldorado:—

There are no doubt extreme and violent Labour associations in America. There is the notorious I.W.W., which stands for "Industrial Workers of the World," though its enemies say that "I Won't Work," would be more descriptive, a society which has been guilty of many murders and other crimes. In the Pennsylvania coal mines there were, a few years ago, conditions of labour which we should consider scandalous. But on the whole there is far less antagonism between employers and employed than there is in England. The American employer grudges his men no wages that they can really earn; and the workman understands that if he wants good wages he must earn them. The machinery is usually better in the United States, which makes mass-production easier; but the spirit of co-operation is the decisive factor. The American workman does not feel that the employer is his natural enemy, whom he must try to injure in every possible way.

The spirit of co-operation as shown in the long and bitter struggles referred to in John

R. Commons' "History of American Labour" or Brissenden's "History of the I.W.W."

The spirit of co-operation is easily explained, however, by the Dean. Each working man being a Capitalist, he co-operates with himself!

Later on our reverend writer forgets his contrast between European class war and American brotherly love. He begins to urge that the difference is really not so much, after all.

Besides, we must not exaggerate the contrast between American prosperity and English distress. There must be a great deal of sound work and sound economics in the country, or we should be worse off than we are. We are still, I believe, second only to the United States in national wealth per head of the population, or, rather, third, for my readers will be surprised to hear that Cuba has passed us. And the British working man saves more than is usually supposed.

But the most pathetic picture painted by the Dean is in his closing paragraph:—

A house divided against itself is brought to desolation. This is the fate which threatens us now. If the evil were caused by moral decadence, it might be useless to preach against it; but if it is largely caused by a gigantic economic heresy, it may be possible to combat it successfully. We have two object-lessons before us—on one side America, faithful to sound economic traditions, and rolling in prosperity; on the other side Russia, the Russia of Lenin, of whom Mr. Cook boasts to be a "humble disciple," ruined, miserable, paralysed with terror. May we not say, "Look on this picture, and on this?"

Consider the marvellous amount of information gained by the Dean on a short tour in America. How much more marvellous is the information gained about Russia by his complete absence from that country? But perhaps this is another instance of where he was "assured" that it was so.

Somebody, not a clergyman, who wished to compare Russia and America would at least deal with the economic development of both countries. The forgetful Dean had only just finished telling us of America's highly developed machinery and technical progress. Did Russia ever have that? No, Russia's most noted possession, apart from Czars, right up to a few years ago, was a highly-organised Christian Church which preached no class war and stifled every attempt at education and progress. While America was developing machinery, Russia was making more ikons! But what are facts to a very reverend?

The greatest horror which haunts Dean Inge is the painful fact stated by him in the article, that although Marx theories are all

wrong, have all been disproved, are completely surpassed, there are evidences, in spite of all this, that Marx's ideas are appealing to the working class.

A. KOHN.

## MATERIALISM AND ART.

By GEORGE PLECHANOFF.

We shall frankly state at the beginning that we intend to view art from the standpoint of the materialist conception of history.

What is the materialist conception of history?

We shall first describe what the idealist conception of history is, and then show wherein the materialist conception of the same subject differs from it.

The idealist conception of history in its true aspect maintains that the development of thought and knowledge is the last and ultimate cause of the historic development of mankind. This view reigned supreme in the eighteenth century, and passed into the nineteenth. Even Saint Simon and August Comte both strongly upheld it, though their views in certain instances were in direct opposition to those of the philosophers of the eighteenth century. Saint Simon, for instance, was interested in the origin of the social organisation of the Greeks.<sup>1</sup> His conclusions are as follows: "The religious system served as a foundation for their political system. . . . The first has been taken as a model for the creation of the latter." As proof of this, he quoted the fact that the Greek Olympus has been a *republican gathering*; no matter how much the constitutions of the different states in Greece had differed one from the other, they had one thing in common, they were all republican.<sup>2</sup> And this is not all. The religious system, which was the foundation of the Greek political system, according to Saint Simon, was in itself the result of their scientific conception of the universe. Their scientific conceptions were the ultimate foundation of their social life, and the development of those conceptions was the principal cause of the historical development of their social life, the main cause of the changes in the historical forms of their life.

Likewise August Comte thought that "the

<sup>1</sup> Greece had a special meaning for Saint Simon, because, according to his opinion, "c'est chez les grecs que l'esprit humain a commence a s'occuper serieusement de l'organisation sociale."

<sup>2</sup> See his *Memoire sur la science de l'homme*.

entire social mechanism rested in the last analysis on opinions.<sup>1</sup> This is plainly a repetition of the view of the encyclopædists according to whom "c'est l'opinion qui gouverne le monde" (the universe is ruled by opinion).

Another variety of idealism found its expression in Hegel's absolute idealism. How does Hegel explain the historical development of humanity? An example will suffice. Hegel asks: Why has Greece fallen? After pointing out many causes, he shows that the main cause, according to his philosophy, was that Greece had expressed only one stage in the development of the absolute idea, and had to fall when this stage had been accomplished.

Hegel, although knowing that "Lacedæmon had fallen because of inequality of property," nevertheless maintains that social relations, as well as the historical development of mankind in general, are determined in the last instance by the laws of logic, by the development of thought.

The materialistic conception of history is diametrically opposed to the above view. If Saint Simon, considering history from the idealistic viewpoint, thought that the religious opinion of Greeks explained their social relations, then we from the materialistic point of view will say just the opposite. And if Saint Simon, when asked where the religious views of the Greeks come from would answer that they are the result of their scientific views of the universe, we should in turn reply that the social relations of the Greeks determined their religious conceptions, both of which were determined by the rise and decline of the productive forces which the Greeks had at their disposal.

This is our historical doctrine. It is our point of departure in our investigation about art. It is clear that the investigation of a particular problem, the problem of art, will be at the same time a proof of our general view of history. If this general view be wrong, then it will explain very little indeed of the evolution of art. But if we should find that this theory explains the evolution of art better than any other theory, then this in itself will be a new and strong proof of the accuracy of our theory. But here we foresee an objection; Darwin in his famous book, "The Descent of Man," brought together many observations as evidence that the sense of beauty plays an im-

<sup>1</sup> Cours de philosophie positive, Paris, 1869, vol. 1, pp. 40-41.



portant role in the lives of animals. Our attention will be drawn to these facts, and we shall be told that the origin of the sense of beauty must be explained by biology; it will also be remarked that it is unpermissible to narrowly explain the evolution of this sense in men only through the economic basis of their society. And as Darwin's view upon the development of species is undoubtedly materialistic, it will be urged that biological materialism gives excellent material for criticism of the one-sided historical (*economical*) materialism.

This objection is a serious one, and we shall reply to it. We will do this more gladly because, while replying to this objection, we shall at the same time reply to a series of similar objections that have been drawn from the domain of the psychic lives of animals.

First of all, we will make clear the conclusions to which we must come according to the facts brought out by Darwin. Let us see what are his own conclusions.

In the second chapter of the first part of his book, "The Descent of Man," we read:—

Sense of Beauty: This sense has been declared to be peculiar to man. I refer here only to the pleasure given by certain colours, forms and sounds, and which may fairly be called a sense of the beautiful; with cultivated men such sensations are, however, intimately associated with complex ideas and trains of thought. When we behold a male bird elaborately displaying his graceful plumes or splendid colours before the female, while other birds not thus decorated make no such display, it is impossible to doubt that she admires the beauty of her male partner. As women everywhere deck themselves with these plumes, the beauty of such ornaments cannot be disputed. As we shall see later, the nests of humming birds and the playing passages of bower birds, are tastefully ornamented with gaily coloured objects, and this shows that they must receive some kind of pleasure from the sight of such things. With the great majority of animals, however, the taste for the beautiful is confined, as far as we can judge, to the attractions of the opposite sex. The sweet strains poured forth by many male birds during the season of love are certainly admired by the females, of which fact evidence will be hereafter given. If female birds had been incapable of appreciating the beautiful colours, the ornaments and voices of their male partners, all the labour and anxiety exhibited by the latter in displaying their charms before the females would have been thrown away; and this it is impossible to admit. Why certain bright colours should excite pleasure cannot, I presume, be explained any more than why certain flavours and scents are agreeable; but habit has something to do with the result, for that which is at first unpleasant to our senses ultimately becomes pleasant, and habits are inherited. With respect to

sounds, Helmholtz has explained to a certain extent on physiological principles why harmonies and certain cadences are agreeable. But besides this, sounds frequently recurring at irregular intervals are highly disagreeable, as everyone will admit who has listened at night to the irregular flapping of a rope on board ship. The same principle seems to come into play with vision, as the eye prefers symmetry or figures with some regular recurrence. Patterns of this kind are employed by even the lowest savages as ornaments, and they have been developed through sexual selection for the adornment of some male animals. Whether we can or not give any reason for the pleasure thus derived from vision and hearing, yet man and many of the lower animals are alike pleased by the same colours, graceful shading and forms, and the same sounds.

And so the facts given by Darwin show that lower animals experience aesthetic tastes that coincide closely with those of man. But this does not explain the origin of these tastes; if biology does not explain the origin of our aesthetic tastes, it can even less explain their historical development. But let Darwin speak for himself:

The taste for the beautiful, at least as far as female beauty is concerned, is not of a special nature in the human mind, for it differs widely in the human mind; it differs widely in the different races of man, and is not quite the same even in the different nations of the same race. Judging from the hideous ornaments and the equally hideous music admired by most savages, it might be urged that their aesthetic faculty was not so highly developed as that of certain animals, for instance, as the birds.<sup>1</sup>

If the conceptions of the beautiful are different with different nations of the same race, it is clear that we cannot look for the causes of these differences in biology. Darwin himself tells us that we should carry our search in a different direction. In the second English translation of his book, "The Descent of Man," we read the following:

With cultivated men such (aesthetic) sensations are intimately associated with complex ideas and trains of thought.

This is very important. It leads us from biology to sociology, as it is obvious, according to Darwin that social causes determine a civilised man's conceptions of beauty and the association of the complex ideas connected with them. But is Darwin right in thinking that such associations take place only among civilised people? No, he is not. It is known that skins, claws and teeth play an important role in the ornaments of primitive man. How is it to be explained? With the combinations of the colours and lines in those objects? No. The savage attiring himself, for instance, in the skins, paws and

<sup>1</sup> Descent of Man, p. 50.

teeth of a tiger, or skin and horns of a bison, exalts his own skill and strength. He who conquers the skilful is skilful himself, he who conquers the strong is himself strong. It is possible that there is some superstition intermingled with the idea. Skulcraft relates that the red-skinned tribes of North-western America love ornaments made from the claws of a grey bear, the most ferocious animal of that region. The red-skinned warrior thinks that the ferocity and bravery of the grey bear is transferred to the one who attires himself in that animal's claws. And these claws, remarks Skulcraft, are partially an ornament, partially an amulet.<sup>1</sup> In this instance it is impossible to think that the red-skinned men liked animals' skins, claws and teeth only because of the combinations of colour and line.<sup>2</sup> No, the opposite is much more probable, i.e., that these things first were worn merely as a sign of bravery, skill and strength, and only afterwards did they begin to call out aesthetic feelings and become used as ornaments. From this it follows that aesthetic feelings not only are associated with complex ideas among savages, but that they arise through the influence of such ideas.

Another instance: It is known that women of some African races wear iron rings on their hands and legs. The wives of the rich, for example, wear nearly forty pounds of those ornaments.<sup>3</sup> This, of course, is rather inconvenient, but this inconvenience does not prevent them from wearing with pleasure these chains of slavery, as Schweinfurth calls them. Why, then, is it so agreeable to a negress to wear such chains? Because it is through them that she seems prettier to herself and others. And why does she appear prettier? This is the result of a very complex association of ideas. Passion for such ornaments developed among the tribes which, according to Schweinfurth, now live in the iron age, and for which iron is a precious metal. That which is precious seems beautiful, for the idea of opulence is associated with it. A woman in one of those tribes appears more beautiful when she wears twenty pounds of those rings than

<sup>1</sup> Historical and statistical information respecting the history, conditions and prospects of the Indian tribes of the United States, vol. 3, p. 216.

<sup>2</sup> There is a case, however, where objects of the same kind are liked only for their colour.

<sup>3</sup> Schweinfurth. Au Coeur d'Afrique, Paris, 1875, vol. 1, p. 148. Also Du Chaillu: Voyage et aventures dans l'Afrique équatoriale, Paris, 1863, p. 11.

when she wears only ten pounds; the difference, finally considered, is a matter of totality of wealth. It is clear that it is not the beauty of the iron ring that is the determinant, but the idea of wealth which is associated with it.

A third instance: In a certain tribe Batoka, in the upper part of the river Zambesi, a man whose upper incisor teeth are not pulled out is considered very ugly. Where did they get this strange conception of beauty? It, too, has been formed as the result of a complex association of ideas. With their incisor teeth withdrawn the men tend to imitate the ruminant animals, and Batoka is a shepherd tribe that worships its cows and bulls.<sup>1</sup> Here again the beautiful is that which is precious, and we see that aesthetic ideas rise on the foundation of ideas of quite a different order.

The best example, however, is to be taken from Livingston; it is also given by Darwin. In the tribe of Makalolo, the upper lip is pierced and a metallic or bamboo ring, called a pelele, is inserted. When one of their leaders was asked why the women wore these rings, he was very much surprised that such an absurd question should be asked. "For beauty. This is a woman's only ornament. Men have beards. What would she look like without a pelele?" It is hard to say with certainty where they got the custom, but it is clear that its origin is to be sought in some complex association of ideas and not in the laws of biology, to which evidently it has no relation.

In view of these examples we feel justified in declaring that appreciations and feelings, called out by certain colours and lines in objects, even among the primitive peoples, are associated with very complex ideas, and many of those forms and combinations seem to them so beautiful only because of these associations. But what gives rise to these associations, and where arise the complex ideas associated with these feelings which are evoked when we see these things? Evidently this question can be answered not by biology, but by sociology. And if the materialist conception of history helps more toward its solution than any other view, if we are convinced that the association of complex ideas mentioned above is determined and created in the last instance by the state of the productive forces and economic conditions of the given society then we must admit that Darwinism does not in the

<sup>1</sup> Schweinfurth, vol. 1, p. 148.



least contradict the materialist conception of history.

Although we cannot say much here about Darwin's relations to our doctrine, we shall at least note it.

Let us turn our attention to the following lines :—

It may be well first to premise that I do not wish to maintain that any strictly social animal, if its intellectual faculties were to become as active and as highly developed as those of man, would acquire exactly the same manner. As various animals have some sense of beauty, though they admire widely different objects, so they might have a sense of right and wrong, though led by it to follow widely different lines of conduct. If, for instance, to take an extreme case, men were reared under precisely the same conditions as hive bees, there can hardly be a doubt that our unmarried females would, like the worker bee, think it a sacred duty to kill their fertile daughters, and no one would think of interfering. Nevertheless, the bee, or any other social animal, would gain, as it appears to me, some feeling of right or wrong, or a conscience.

What follows from these words? That in the moral conceptions of men there is nothing *absolute*; that moral concepts change with the conditions of the time.

But what creates these conditions? What causes their changes? Darwin says nothing about this, and if we say and prove that the productive forces create them and change them according to the development of those forces, then we shall not only not contradict Darwin, but shall even add to what he has said and explain what has remained unexplained by him. And we shall do it by applying to the study of *social phenomena* the same principles that served him so well in *biology*.

It may seem extremely strange to put Darwinism beside the historical conception of history. The domain of Darwin's activity was entirely different. He viewed the descent of man as a zoological species. Those who are on the side of the named view wish to explain the historical destiny of this species. Their domain of investigation begins where the domain of the Darwinist investigations end.

Their works cannot replace that which the Darwinists have given us; likewise, the most splendid discoveries of Darwinists cannot replace their investigations, but can only prepare a ground for them, as the physicist prepares the ground for the chemist.

Darwin's theory appeared in its time as a very big and necessary step in the development of *biological science*, and satisfied the most acute and searching questions

that were put to it. Is it possible to say the same of the materialist conception of history? Is it possible to say that in its time it appeared as an inevitable step in the development of social science? And is it able now to satisfy all the demands put to it? To this we can reply with certainty. Yes, it is possible. Yes, it is able. And we hope to show that such a certainty is not deprived of foundations.

But let us turn to aesthetics. From the above quotations from Darwin it is clear that he views the development of aesthetic tastes in the same light as the development of moral feelings. Men, like many animals, have a sense of beauty—that is, they are able to feel a special kind of pleasure (aesthetic pleasure) due to certain objects and phenomena.

But what are the objects and phenomena which afford them so much pleasure? This depends upon the environment in which they are brought up, live and act. Human nature makes it possible for man to have aesthetic tastes and conceptions. His environment determines the transition from this possibility into reality. This environment explains how this given social man (i.e., society, nation or class) has certain aesthetic tastes and conceptions and not others.

This is the last conclusion of Darwinism, and this conclusion will not be opposed by any historical materialist. In fact, every one of them will see in it a new support of this view. The historic materialists have steadily maintained that if human nature is immutable, then it cannot explain this historical process, which presents a sum of constantly changing phenomena; but if human nature changes with the course of historical development, as we see it does, then it is evident that there must be some objective cause for these changes. And therefore in this, as well as in the other case, the duty of both historian and sociologist must be to go beyond the limit of discussions about human nature.

Let us take even such a quality as the proclivity to imitation. Mr. Tarde, who has made a quite interesting research into the laws of imitation, sees in them the soul of society. According to his definition, each social group is a complex of beings, partially imitating each other at the given time and partially having imitated before the same model. Imitation undoubtedly played a very important role in the history of all our ideas, tastes, styles and customs. The materialist's

of the eighteenth century have indicated its enormous importance; man consists wholly of imitations, said Helvetius. But there is little doubt that Tarde founded his theory of imitation on a false basis.

When the Restoration of the Stuarts in England temporarily restored the reign of ancient nobility, this nobility was not in the least inclined to imitate the extreme representatives of the revolutionary bourgeoisie—the Puritans—but displayed a strong inclination to habits and tastes directly contrary to the Puritan rules of life.

Puritan strictness of morals gave place to extreme licentiousness. To do and love that which the Puritans had prohibited became a good. The Puritans were very religious; the Restorationists were latitudinarian, even atheistic. The Puritan persecuted the theatre and literature; their fall gave a signal to a new and strong passion for those things. The Puritans wore short hair and condemned luxury in clothes; after the Restoration, long hair, fashionable dressing and card-playing became the passion. In short, we discover not imitation, but contradiction, which evidently also exists in human nature. But why did this sense of contradiction in the mutual relations of the nobility and bourgeoisie develop so strongly in England in the seventeenth century? Because this was an age of very bitter struggle between nobility and bourgeoisie, or rather say "the third estate." We may conclude, then, that, though man undoubtedly has a strong tendency to imitate, this tendency develops only in certain social relations, as in the relations which existed in France during the seventeenth century, where the bourgeoisie willingly, though unsuccessfully, attempted to imitate the nobility: recall Moliere's "The Bourgeois Among the Nobility." In other social relations the tendency to imitate is replaced by the opposite tendency, which we shall call the tendency of contradiction. But we expressed this incorrectly. The tendency to imitate did not disappear among the English of the seventeenth century. First of all it was most certainly, with all of its previous strength, displayed in the mutual relations between the people of the same class. Beljame says about the English of the higher society: "These people were not even unbelievers; they denied a priori, so that no one could mistake them for the round-headed, and also so as not to give themselves the trouble to

think." About these people we can say that they denied for the sake of imitating. But in imitating the infidels they, of course, contradicted the Puritans. Imitation proved to be, therefore, a source of contradiction. But we know that if among the English noblemen the weaker people imitated disbelief more vigorously, that this arose because disbelief was considered well-breeding, and it became such only in virtue of contradiction, only as a reaction against Puritanism—a reaction which, in its turn, came as a result of the above-mentioned class struggle. Therefore, in the foundation of all this complex dialectics of psychic phenomena lay facts of social order, and out of this it is clear to what extent and in what sense the conclusion made above from Darwin's thesis is correct: that man's nature makes it possible for him to have certain conceptions (or tastes or inclinations), and that upon his environment depends the transition of this possibility into a reality; the environment makes him have precisely these conceptions (or tastes or inclinations) and not others. If we are not mistaken, the same was admitted by one of the Russian historical materialists.

If the stomach is provided with a certain amount of food it sets to work according to the general laws of digestion. But is it possible through this to explain why there is in your stomach every day tasty and nourishing food, and in my stomach such is a scarce guest? Do these laws explain why some eat too much and others die of hunger? It seems that this explanation is to be sought somewhere else, in entirely different laws. The same is true with a man's mind. Once he is put in a certain condition, once the surroundings give him certain impressions, he combines them through certain general laws; and here also the results differ extremely, according to the diversity of the received impressions. But what puts it in this state? What determines the affluence in character of those impressions? This is a question which is not to be solved by any laws of thought.

<sup>1</sup> Alexandre Beljame, *Le Public et les Hommes de lettres en Angleterre du dix-huitième Siècle*, Paris, 1881, pages 1-10. Also Taine, *Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise*, vol. 2, p. 443, and following.

(To be concluded in the next issue.)

Translated for "Modern Quarterly" by Bessie Pevetz.

#### ILFORD.

Sympathisers living near above district willing to form a branch of the Party are invited to communicate with

Comrade S. CASH, 32, Greenway,  
Green Lanes, Chadwell Heath, Essex.



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**The Socialist Standard,**

SEPT,



1926

**THE MINERS' POSITION.**

For over four months the mine workers have struggled against the attempt to increase their hours of labour and reduce their wages. Their main means of resistance has been tightening their belts. In face of privation, daily becoming more intense, they have shown solidarity and resisting-power that is amazing, and a good omen for the day when they learn that the real solution of their difficulties lies in the organisation of society on the basis of common ownership of the means of production, and not in a struggle over wages and conditions of labour.

We have seen five pay-tickets of a South Wales coal-hewer (the hewer is the best paid man in the industry) who has been in the mines for nearly forty years. The tickets were taken at random between March and May, 1926, and the amounts he drew for each week were as follows:—

£1 11s. 9d., £3 9s. 2d., £2 4s. 1d., 18s. 2d., £1 9s. 5d., and he had to pay a boy 4s. 6d. a day for part of the time. The actual pay-tickets of a miner disposes of the tales of the fabulous amounts they are alleged to earn.

Out of the total amount a coal-hewer, working on piece-work, gets for the coal obtained, he has to pay assistants and various charges—check-weigher, hospital, mine-examiner, stores, doctor, insurance, hall

funds, etc.—all of which considerably reduces the actual money he is to receive for his work.

The attempt to worsen the miners' position is backed by the plea that the industry cannot afford to pay the present wages. This plea is put forward by the pretended friends as well as the avowed enemies of the miners. Yet if ever there was an industry that had power for the wealth in abundance for idle parasites that industry is coal-mining. Mining companies during the last ten years have made large additions to their capitals and reserves without drawing a penny out of shareholders' pockets. The profits of the industry have been enormous.

Here are one or two illustrations taken from recent years:—

North's Navigation Collieries, Ltd., declared dividends of 20 per cent. a year for the years 1916-17-18-19, and 15 per cent. for 1920. In 1918 they also distributed a bonus of 25 per cent. For the five years ending in 1920, therefore, they paid, in all, 120 per cent. on the capital invested. In other words, the whole of the capital the investors put in was returned to them with an additional 20 per cent. as well—and they still had their original capital in the company on which to draw future dividends.—(*Daily News*, 11/4/21.)

The Weardale Steel, Coal & Coke Co. declared dividends of 19 1/3 per cent. per year for the five years to 1920-21, 6 per cent. for 1922, and 10 per cent. for 1923, which makes a total of 112 2/3 per cent. for seven years—all their money back with an additional 12 2/3 per cent., and still the original capital to draw dividends on. On top of that, the company had a reserve of £610,000 which is equal to 84 per cent. of the issued share capital.—(*Financial News*, 16/11/23.)

The Old Silkstone Collieries, Ltd., an amalgamation of several other colliery concerns, sent out a prospectus which was printed in the *Observer* (10/12/22). This prospectus contains particulars of profits and output from 1913 to 1922; an examination of it gives very interesting information. The following list contains some of the figures:—

|             | Output.<br>Tons. | Profit.<br>£ |
|-------------|------------------|--------------|
| 1913 ... .. | 1,139,271        | 93,539       |
| 1914 ... .. | 1,248,673        | 139,284      |
| 1916 ... .. | 1,129,789        | 140,196      |
| 1917 ... .. | 1,038,893        | 175,371      |
| 1920 ... .. | 769,239          | 179,885      |
| 1921 ... .. | 818,984          | 264,683      |

Note the steadily declining output with a steadily increasing profit! 1913 was a record coal year for the United Kingdom, according to the *Daily News*, 24/6/14.

The annual average of profit for the nine years ending 1921 was £143,000, a total for the period of nearly thirteen million pounds. This profit was obtained on a total invested capital of £590,565. And they would have us believe that the industry is too poor to pay the present wages!!

What to the capitalist is yearly toll of diseased, maimed and killed in the mines? The interest on capital invested far outweighs the cost of its production, because the interest is taken by the capitalist while the cost is borne by the worker.

Whatever the result of the struggle in the mining districts may be, it is for the miners themselves to decide how far they are prepared to go, and what conditions they are prepared to accept. There are plenty of busybodies with full bellies who are urging them to make concessions in one direction or another, instead of leaving the sufferers to make what arrangements they themselves think fit.

**A CORRECTION.**

A printer's error occurred in the article "Henry Ford or Karl Marx" in August issue. The quotation from Marx's Capital on page 185 was taken from Vol. I. of that work not Vol. IV. as printed in error.

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**SUBJECT—**

**The Declaration of Principles of the Socialist Party of Great Britain.**

**SOCIALISM AND THE ESSENTIALS OF ANARCHISM.**

Another correspondent's letter and our reply.

The Editor, SOCIALIST STANDARD,  
Socialist Party of Great Britain,  
17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1.

Dear Sir,

I have followed with interest the discussion which has been conducted in recent issues of your journal with Mr. Beer, of Deptford. It has prompted me to pen the following observations, which I trust you will publish together with a reply in your next issue.

A statement from you upon the theoretical differences which you assume exist between Socialism and Anarchism would be welcome. You must recognise that criticism of the activities of exponents of a creed is not criticism of the creed itself. The essential feature of Anarchist philosophy is the recognition, in the words of Herbert Spencer "that each man possesses the right to do that which he wills in fulfilling the demands of his own life, in so far as he infringes not the equal right of every other man." Or, in other words, that he possesses rights as an individual. Anarchism asserts further that individuals when confronted with alternatives of action, choose that which is conducive to self-interest. Private property society tends to confine this self-interest within the narrow zone of immediate economic advantage, thus placing a premium upon petty cunning and scheming. It stifles the development and increasing differentiation of individuality and insists upon conformity to type. Mankind, however, is struggling, for the most part, unconsciously, toward a society in which the liberty of the individual, and the interest of the community will be synonymous terms. Recognising the essentially egoistic motivation of human behaviour, Anarchism asserts that only by fulfilling his obligations to himself in developing his individuality, can Man act in the communal interest. For individuality implies a logical self-completeness. The individual is a self-contained universe, the peculiar product of heredity and environment to whom no other individual is exactly similar. Consequently, no one but himself can legislate for himself, and therefore Anarchism is only realisable in a community of persons who have freely associated for mutual benefit. The antithesis of Anarchy is coercion. Moral values in such a free



society would be based upon equity, and a mutual respect which is foreign to our present social structure.

The opinion is often expressed that Anarchists lack a policy, a suggestion with which I will now deal.

A blind evolution operates in the social, as in the organic and cosmic spheres, oblivious to human desires. Revolutions occur when the appropriate stage of evolution has been attained. They are the culmination of processes operating unnoticed over a lengthy period. Recognising this to be so, and also that man, in common with all matter, is the creature of the environmental stimuli amongst which he exists, Anarchists can only hope to convert humanity to an outlook diametrically opposed to that which its social surroundings induces, by the presentment of a clearly defined revolutionary gospel. That is the Anarchist policy, as I understand it. Persistent propaganda, characterised by clarity of thinking and consistent adherence to established principles. I used the term "Humanity," above, intentionally. For the whole of mankind are the victims of social shortcomings, a logical deduction from acceptance of economic determinism which can scarcely be refuted, but is apt to be forgotten. The class conflict is the blind struggle of two camps, both of whom suffer from the same disease, which it is the role of the socially subservient to cure.

This is a brief sketch of my conception of Anarchist philosophy and policy. Trusting for a reply in the "S.S.," I am,

Yours sincerely,  
JOHN ADAMSON.

#### OUR REPLY.

This letter is printed as a further example of the difficulty in obtaining a statement of the Anarchist attitude upon social questions. The writer sets out by upholding Herbert Spencer's individualistic dictum which followed from Spencer's defence of private property in the means of life. In the very next sentence, our Anarchist rejects Spencer and opposes private property society. The argument that the individual possesses rights has been answered by other Anarchists that might is right, and the only right. The fundamental fallacy of the natural rights theory was completely refuted by Spencer himself in his "Study of Sociology" in his masterly statement of the organic nature of society.

Our correspondent is another Anarchist

who ignores the fundamental conflict in Socialist and Anarchist ideas.

He claims that mankind are going towards a society in which individual and communal interest will be harmonious. What will be the basis of that society? Our Anarchist does not say. Our position is briefly that economic evolution has made common ownership of the means of life the inevitable next step in social progress owing to the form taken by the modern instruments of production. They cannot be individually owned except by a class of exploiters with the resulting poverty and insecurity of today. The economic pressure upon working-class life will compel the workers to seek knowledge to change the system in accord with the social necessities of production—social ownership. Further, that as the manner of ownership determines the manner of control, common ownership decrees democratic control by the wealth-producers.

Our correspondent offers no alternative to the Socialist position. He does not even deal with it. If he was a supporter of private ownership, his individualistic theories might be logical. If he agrees with common ownership, he must appreciate the necessity of social control.

The basis of social as well as individual life is food, clothing and shelter—the material requirements of life. How will they be produced and distributed in our Anarchist's future society? We are not told. We are told that mankind is struggling unconsciously towards individual and social harmony. But our correspondent also says that Anarchism can only be realised by a body of persons who have freely associated for mutual benefit.

Which of his two positions he really favours we do not know. Economic necessity being the driving force, the workers will be compelled to carry on production for themselves. That economic necessity will not wait until the fruition of our correspondent's dream of everybody freely agreeing to the terms of association. The common welfare decides, and therefore in matters of social necessity, such as the operation of the great means of production and distribution—the majority will count. Mr. Adamson and individuals who resolutely object to all forms of coercion will find that economic evolution is a great coercing force. In the production of every day's means of living, all the producers must share upon a commonly agreed plan—democratically decided

—not a plan that makes our everyday wants wait upon a whole series of groups of individuals debating and arguing until the last waverer is won to the others' point of view. These matters of social evolution and economic development are forgotten by our correspondent, who evidently does not see that the means of production demands co-operative working.

We are offered statements such as: "the individual is a self-contained universe," and that "no one but himself can legislate for himself." These are completely refuted by our Anarchist himself when he claims that mankind are struggling towards a society in which the individual and the communal interests will be synonymous. If the individual is a self-contained universe, why our correspondent's desire for a community of persons for mutual benefit? Why the need for propaganda amongst others? The insistence of self-interest as a guiding motive by our correspondent ignores the facts pointed out by the Socialist, namely, that a common interest existing among the working-class, it is to their interest to act together as a class to establish a society which promotes the self-interests of the workers: Socialism.

We have frequently, in these columns, stated the attitude of Socialism to Anarchism, and do not feel that it is worth while to go into the whole matter once more at present, especially as each Anarchist who writes has an anarchism all of his own, each one apparently being a law unto himself, if not "a self-contained universe."

A. KOHN.

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#### "THE REPAIR GANG" OF CAPITALISM.

Travellers in the wilds assure us that a man lost therein without knowledge of woodcraft or special means of ascertaining his position will find himself wandering in a circle; the word circle is understood in a rather wide sense, the point being that the lost man arrives eventually at his starting point.

The planets likewise move in orbits, and a similar form would appear to characterise all blind, unconscious movements, political ones included. Thus, that outstanding phenomena of modern times, the "Labour" movement, presents almost innumerable instances of parties or sects, returning, after prolonged journeyings in the labyrinth of confusion, to the place of departure.

Take as an example the case of the I.L.P. We have heard a lot from that quarter recently about "Socialism in our time!" Does not this call to mind the early days of that body over thirty years ago? According to its leading lights then, the Social Democratic Federation of the time was not practical and did not present actual living issues to the masses. It was absorbed in revolutionary theorising to the exclusion of a definite line of action. The I.L.P. was going to change all that. It was going to bring Socialism into actual being.

It went about the business by seeking the support of the Trade Unions for candidates run on a programme of reform such as nationalisation of various industries with a living wage for all. So far as getting their candidates elected goes, the I.L.P. have been undoubtedly successful. The Trade Unions have found the money, and the I.L.P. found the men. Over a hundred of the Labour M.P.'s are drawn from its ranks. Yet even on the threshold of political success, with a parliamentary majority at no very distant date dazzling its eyes, disillusion creeps into its ranks.

The experiment in "Labour" Government, carried on with the connivance of the avowed capitalist parties, showed quite a number of the rank and file of the I.L.P. that, so far from leading to Socialism, their leaders had precious little time for even the I.L.P.'s reformists nostrums. Hence these nostrums are trotted out and restated with all the vigour and fervour of fanaticism just as though a new discovery had been made. We have the "practical" I.L.P. once more



trying to find a comfortable half-way house between the capitalist Liberalism of its leaders and the vague, sentimental yearnings of its followers for "Socialism."

No fundamental change in the object and policy of the I.L.P., however, is dreamt of. The simple fact that Socialism can only be established by a Socialist working-class is ignored. The leaders are criticised not because they are leaders, but because, in the eyes of their followers, they are not "good" leaders. The bewildered following look around for other leaders, but do not realise that similar results must follow. All leaders are "good" (i.e., make extravagant promises) so long as they are still on the climb. Their intentions may be benevolent or merely ambitious, but in the long run their actions are determined by the conditions of their existence. These conditions are: capitalist society, and a blind following, which, though dissatisfied therewith, does not understand how to overthrow it.

The policy of capturing the machinery of the Trade Unions while ignoring the necessity for Socialist education of the rank and file of the workers, has led, and can lead, to nothing more than the elevation of a series of "leaders" to office and favour with the master-class. If working-class history is any guide, it is only a matter of time before each little group of "leaders," as it arises, follows its predecessor along the path to "responsibility" (to the capitalist class) and practical inability to reduce Utopia to a working formula.

A knowledge of the economic laws of capitalist development would prevent the workers indulging in day-dreams about "a living wage," and would impel them to organise for the abolition of the wages system. The absurdity of attempts at compromise on this point was glaringly exemplified by the "Labour" representatives before the Coal Commission. These champions of nationalisation put forward elaborately worked-out schemes, only to be driven to admit that these same schemes would not solve the "wages-problem" with which the Commission was confronted. In short, the workers have nothing to look forward to under capitalism but intensified exploitation and insecurity.

As Socialists, we are not concerned with the dilemma raised at the I.L.P. Conference by the suggestion that industries not paying a "living wage" should be nationalised first. According to McDonald, this implied

the taking-over of *bankrupt* industries first! The delegates forthwith became involved in a conflict between their devotion to their "ideals" and the necessity of being "practical," i.e., making a State concern show a profit. It is sufficient to show, however, the essentially capitalist outlook of the I.L.P. As Socialists, we advocate the conversion into common property of all industrial undertakings which are indispensable for the provision of the wants of the workers, and we see no reason why the workers are obliged to pick and choose, in a piecemeal manner, the industries to be dealt with. That process is only necessary to the "Labour" politicians who know that they have no mandate for Socialism, and are thus obliged to frame a programme which will suit the interests of some section or other of the capitalist class.

The I.L.P. has climbed to influence by angling for Liberal votes. Having got them its representatives are necessarily bound to come to terms with the master-class. Any attempt to introduce Socialism with a non-Socialist electorate is foredoomed to failure, and it is only the dupes of the "Left Wing" that imagine otherwise.

The Communist Party are another bunch who move in circles, and seem proud of it. Twenty years ago, the Social Democratic Party catered for those who delight in combining reformist action with revolutionary phraseology. Then, as now, there were not lacking short-sighted members of the working-class who imagined that they could rally their class round a programme of "immediate demands"; they never knew quite what to do as a body at election time, but were usually to be found supporting "progressives" of all shades. The S.D.P. became the B.S.P., from which, after the war, the Communist Party sprang. We have witnessed a diverting exhibition of political hysteria on the part of this body, followed by an equally amusing *volte face* before the cold douche of experience. Now they are back again once more on the old familiar ground of "immediate demands," plus support of the Labour Party. The "Communist" of to-day is but the Social Democrat of twenty years ago, under another name.

The Socialist Party was formed with a definite revolutionary objective expressed in unswerving tactics. The scientific method as applied by Marx and Engels has been its guide. Hence for us there has been no wandering in circles; no futile attempts to

advance before we have accumulated the army for the attack. That we are satisfied with our rate of progress we do not, for one moment, pretend; but we have at least the satisfaction of knowing that if the workers exhibit the signs of confusion, it is not due to our propaganda.

That, at any rate, has been clear and definite. When the workers learn to see in Socialism their only hope, when they realise that it can only be gained by their own efforts in the teeth of the opposition of their masters, then we know that they will march forward as one body, blundering neither to right or left, till their emancipation is achieved. E. B.

#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. H. KERR (Kilburn).—You confuse wages with value. Your labour creates a certain amount of value, but only part of your labour is paid for and part is unpaid labour. Read Marx's "Wage, Labour and Capital," also "Value, Price and Profit"; both are cheap pamphlets which answer your questions fully.

A. W. SMITH (Wood Green).—Your currency questions will be dealt with in next issue.

E. WRIGHT (London, S.E.).—Your letter about the "Money System" will be answered in next issue.

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#### THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE WORKER.

When the industrial revolution occurred in this country, roughly between 150 to 175 years ago, its champions, the merchant-manufacturing class preached the gospel of work. These commercial highwaymen and their followers, the aristocracy, the priest and the politician, were all loud in proclaiming the "virtues and glories" of work. Not being fond of it themselves, they were able to let others enjoy the "honour." In those days there was little else to engage the time of the workers—except the prisons and the stocks, if obstinacy made them prefer the open-air life to the foul fumes of the "workhouse." Because it must be remembered that the wholesale confiscation or enclosure of the common lands which had previously taken place, had driven the small peasant farming class and their motley following off the land. Those who failed or refused to find masters were treated and branded as criminals, vagrants, etc.

What little opportunity there was for indulging in the "fine arts," i.e., bear baiting, cock fighting, the chase, and the few intellectual pursuits popular and possible at the time of which we are writing, were the exclusive privilege of the nobility and their favoured followers. Therefore, the class who worked, being ignorant of everything else but work, listened patiently to the preachings of their "superiors" and "got on with it," while others "got away with it."

It is well to grasp the great changes which have taken place during the 200 years or so which have intervened. Such a study of history shatters the notion, so diligently fostered by the ruling class, "that things have always been the same."

To-day, for instance, the unemployed worker has become largely resigned to the fact that he is one of the "out-of-works." He knows there are millions in the same plight, for whom the State is compelled from mere force of numbers affected, to institute State-aided unemployment insurance funds.

Young and old equally are thus victimised side by side. The younger ones find difficulty in finding openings and the old ones still more difficulty in keeping theirs.

In short, the application of scientific methods in wealth production has developed



at such a rate that every year must show a decrease in the number of workers required to engage in this production. Thus there is left behind an ever-increasing army of unemployed.

Side by side with the development of the means of wealth production, changes have taken place in what we may term the social side of the workers' lives. To compare the stage-coach—wherein each traveller suspected the other as being "the wanted highwayman"—with the "comfort" of the modern motor car, coach and ubiquitous bus, the bonnets, bustles and crinolines of Victorian wenches with the "Eton cropped" and dress-shortened athletic girl of to-day; the hobby-horse and bone-shaker, with the easily-propelled bicycle; the news sheets and exclusive calf-bound volumes, with the modern newspaper and public and private circulating and reference libraries, where the modern student can readily obtain literature, classical, scientific, historical, covering a wide range of subjects. Consider again the educational facilities of to-day compared with say 50 years ago! Secondary schools, polytechnics, University extension courses open for day or evening students; the theatre, concert halls, picture shows, wireless, the playing fields; museums, picture galleries, etc.

Such are the assets of social life in the towns of to-day, which constitute, within prescribed limits, the liberating influences which tend to separate the worker from work, as "the aim all and end all," as he was taught to look at it, of a short generation ago!

Let us pause here, however, to reflect upon the fact that there is a value in endeavouring "to know something about everything and everything about something." The "something" which we have in mind is political economy, that branch of science which explains the laws which regulate the social system known as Capitalism.

The reader may think this is rather a sudden retreat from the chatty style we had previously adopted. But if an understanding of the principles of a science which reveal the whys and wherefores of the claims of individuals to a foothold on this, our mother earth, is not of primary interest, then we should like to know what is interesting. Because we have come to the conclusion, which we dare not try to prove in the space of one short article like this, that the most the workers can ever attain to is "the

world for the workers." It is enough for us, and in order to attain to this desirable end we will endeavour in a few more lines to broadly point the way.

There is nothing for it but to speak the truth, and unblushingly we refer the reader to the Declaration of Principles on the back page. There it is laid down that the emancipation of the workers must be *the work of the working class itself*. You see, we have returned to "work" again. But such work!

The working class to-day is a slave class. They can only live by selling their labour power—working abilities—to a master class, who, by their ownership of the means of life, keep the workers in their enslaved condition. The effects resulting therefrom flow from a cause. The cause is obviously due to an environment represented by a social system divided into two classes—the workers and the non-workers—whose interests are opposed. This social system—Capitalism—is based upon the private ownership of the means of life, and the task confronting the workers is to gain an understanding of this environment.

"How can this be achieved?" the reader will say. We reply, directly the worker begins to take an intelligent interest in the economic system known as Capitalism, a system which spells for the great majority of the peoples of the earth, long, monotonous, uninteresting days of toil. The Socialist, realising the need to react to his environment, advocates Socialism as the only alternative to Capitalism, wherein the means for producing and distributing the things necessary and desirable in life, will be the common property of society. The details of such a system it would be futile and useless to go into. Suffice it to say that man would control and regulate those gigantic forces of production with which we are to-day so familiar instead of being their slave. Such handicrafts considered desirable and to common good and well-being of society would perhaps be revived thus affording an opportunity once again for mankind to display his creative genius in the arts and crafts which machine industry and manufacturing have so ruthlessly swept aside. Further, the intellectual and physical pursuits, now the privilege of a few, would be possible to all who were capable of enjoying them.

Such vast possibilities for human enter-

prise and endeavour come before the mind's eye that we dare only suggest them.

Remember that to-day, however, the workers vote Capitalism, and in return!—what a ghastly picture! Wars and the infernos which the war gods discharge—death, disease, pestilence, social insurance schemes, adulterated foods, shoddy clothing, asylums, hospitals and sanatoriums galore!

True, mankind is the product of his environment, but thousands of years of progress and change have wrought wonderful results. To-day, mankind is on the threshold of still more wonderful awakenings. The centuries that have passed have been periods of long and ponderous yawnings on the part of mankind at the majestic grandeur and awe-inspiring spectacle of the wonders of Nature. The day, however, is slowly but surely approaching when mankind, recovering from his age-long sleep, confronts Nature and all her myriad wonders with the ripened understanding of the part he can play in the great scheme of things. What does this step mark? It is but the consciousness of the mighty fact, that man is capable of adaptation to his environment.

The Socialist has attempted to organise the experiences of mankind down through the ages, and the outcome of this attempt is the Socialist philosophy of life, which in economics is the common ownership of the means of life.

What flows from this we must leave to posterity. We are not prophets. The Socialist, therefore, stresses the need for the workers to become class-conscious. Consciousness of the abilities of their class to do all the work—as they do to-day—for the benefit of an idle, useless class, means the growth of the desire to so organise this consciousness of class interests, so that it may insure "to those who labour the fruits of labour."

That such a state of things is very desirable, few will deny. Do the many, then, deny the necessity of co-operating with us in bringing about a new order—the Socialist Commonwealth?—or do they think the existing ruling class will "hand the prize over?"

The master-class are never tired of appealing to the worker to:—

"Do as much work as you can."

We of the Socialist Party also make the same appeal to members of our class, with a very important addition: "For the over-

throw of capitalism and the establishment of Socialism."

The environment, *i.e.*, the stage which economic development has reached, shatters the argument that we Socialists are mere idle dreamers, and calls insistently upon the workers to react to the possibility which this environment provides.

That possibility is the establishment of Socialism, when the workers realise and desire it.

O. C. I.

## RUINED BY RICHES.

The extraordinary wrongness of our present industrial system is shown once more by the outcry at the bumper crop of American raw cotton. One would think that a record crop of this kind would be greeted with delight by the user as well as by the ultimate consumer as a guarantee of abundant raw material, low prices, and correspondingly brisk expanding trade. But it appears that in the world constituted as it now is, abundance of raw cotton is a positive calamity. Stated coldly like that, the only possible inference from the assertion is that the world is quite mad. The facts are, we believe, that in value the export of British cotton to India, for instance, is now greater than in 1913, but the volume is from various causes very greatly less than the volume exported in 1913. This state of things is all very well for the banker and the financier; it is ruin to the unfortunate operative who is on permanent short time; because to him, the volume manufactured is everything. But there must be something wrong with a system in which a trade can flourish financially while the people who are engaged in it are in desperate straits, and in which the prospect of ample raw material takes on the air of a positive calamity.—(*Daily News*, 11/8/26.)

We have said this often. Now they say it perhaps it will carry more weight.

GILMAC.

## S.P.G.B. PROPAGANDA MEETINGS LONDON DISTRICT.

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Islington, Highbury Corner, 8 p.m.
- Thursdays:** Hackney, Queens Road, Dalston, 8 p.m.
- Fridays:** Clerkenwell, Garnault Place, 8 p.m.
- Fridays:** West Ham, Water Lane, Stratford, 7.30 p.m.  
Leyton, Church Rd, Markhouse Rd, 7.30 p.m.



**SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****BRANCH DIRECTORY.**

**BATTERSEA.**—Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road. Discussion last Thursday in month. Open to all.

**BIRMINGHAM.**—Communications to E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets A.E.U. Institute, Spiceal-st., every Saturday.

**CENTRAL.**—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.

**CLERKENWELL.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.

**EAST LONDON.**—Communications to A. Jacobs, Sec., 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.

**EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Andrew Porter, 12a, Kings-rd., Portobello.

**GLASGOW.**—Communications to Sec., J. Higgins, 816, Rutherglen-rd., Oatlands, Glasgow.

**HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Saturdays, 7 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare Street, Hackney. Discussions after Branch Business. Communications to Secretary at above address.

**HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock St., Hanley, Staffs. Open to all.

**HULL.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Tuesday in the month at The Institute, Co-operative Society, Ltd., Albion Street, Hull. Communications to G. Vinegrad at above address.

**ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to W. Baker, 35 Alma-st., Kentish Town, N.W.

**LEYTON.**—Communications to A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.

**PADDINGTON.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at Emanuel Church Hall, Harrow Road, near "The Prince of Wales." Communications to G. Shears, 200, Shirland Road, Paddington, W.9.

**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Communications to Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.

**TOOTING.**—Sec., A. Yeomans, 15, University-rd., Collier's Wood, S.W. 19. Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m.

**TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 17, Antil-road, Broad Lane, Tottenham, N.17. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce-grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.

**WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to S. E. Williams, 85, Park-road, E.10. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.

**WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Thursdays at 8.30 p.m. No. 1 Room, Labour Club, Clarendon Road.

**WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.

**WOOD GREEN.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

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**THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN.****OBJECT.**

**The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.**

**Declaration of Principles.****THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain****HOLDS—**

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

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LONDON, OCTOBER, 1926.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## MARX *versus* MEDIUMS. MATERIALISM OR SPIRITUALISM?

"Is Materialism the Basis of Communism?"  
The case against Materialism from the  
Revolutionary Standpoint.  
By Isabel Kingsley.

(Henderson, 6d.)

If a political Party continuously changes its policy and programme, follows one "stunt" after another, and advocates sensational measures of various kinds at different times for the purpose of attracting crowds of various mentalities to its ranks, it must not be surprised if it sometimes reaps a result such methods deserve.

The pamphlet before us is a case in point. Its authoress, attracted by the wild and whirling phrases of the Communist Party, joined that organisation, and then tried to spread her peculiar views inside its ranks. As the Communist Party is ready to support almost any view on particular occasions, this idea of the authoress had considerable justification. But the Party Executive, who make no fetish of logic, forbade such action, and so the pamphlet was published outside in an endeavour to reach the members inside.

Whether such a thing of shreds and patches, with its curious collection of freaks, as the Communist Party, can be said to have any basis beyond the job-hunting schemes of its leaders, and the money from Russia is a moot point.

Throughout the pamphlet there are numerous totally unsupported assertions and claims of the authoress that would take a volume to refute in detail. One or two examples may be taken. On page 7 we are told that "the middle of the eighteenth century saw the rise of Materialism," a statement that A. Lange, the standard historian of Materialism, flatly contradicts. We read on page 9 that a new science

called "Metapsychics" has been discovered, and it is described by Richet in an unreferenced quotation as follows:—

"Metapsychic facts are marked off from the physical in that they seem due to an unknown intelligence." What a convenient "science"? The "facts" (themselves in dispute) seem to be due to an *unknown* intelligence! Perhaps the gem of these baseless assertions is given on page 26, where we are told:—

"Mind has healed broken bones, spinal curvature, and gangrenous wounds, in many cases instantaneously and after every recognised method of treatment had failed."

Still Coué died. But the unkindest cut—to the Communists—is given on page 44, where one reads: "Between present-day Spiritism and Communism there is a striking general analogy." We have never said anything quite so cruel as that.

Another feature of the pamphlet is the large number of statements placed between quotation marks, as if taken from various writers, though references are only given in two or three cases. There is a certain wisdom in this omission as we shall show presently.

A criticism of Materialism, sooner or later, means falling foul of Marx, Engels, Morgan, etc., and the Materialist conception of history, and Isabel Kingsley is not long before she begins her attack. On page 13 she asserts: "Never was there a less scientific mind than that of Marx, nor a less scientific book than 'Capital.'" The authoress' mental inability to understand anything scientific is shown on the same page, when she says that the new idea brought into political economy by Marx was "the equivalence between Capital and



Labour"! Students of Marx will smile at this grotesque nonsense, as well as at the further statement on the same page, that Marx's explanation of value "is not a scientific deduction; it is an ideal of social ethics, a new moral ideal."

As if to make the proof of her ignorance of economics and Marx overwhelming, she follows the above statement with this:—

"While the classical economists regard the labourer as only one means of production, in the Marxian theory he is the sole creator of value."

The most elementary student of economics can see at a glance that the two phrases of this sentence have no direct connection with each other. In addition, it implies a misrepresentation of Marx, because, as it is written, it infers that Marx said there was only one means of production, the labourer, a statement that is specifically refuted on page 10 of "Capital." (Sonnenschein.—Ed.)

Another misrepresentation is given on page 15, where we are told: "Marx's method in 'Capital' is the method of the moralist. He first postulates an absolute morality." One need go no further than the preface to "Capital" to see the falsity of this statement.

A further instance of misrepresentation is when the authoress, on page 14, describes Engel's book as "Socialism, from Utopia to Science." Engels, of course, did not use such an absurd title, and it is in contradiction to the views in the text. There is not even the excuse of a translator's slip, as Engels saw the English edition of this work through the press and wrote a special preface for it.

When the subject of the Materialist Conception of History is reached, the misrepresentation becomes blatant. The first thing that strikes the reader is that there is not a single quotation or even a word from Marx's writing on this subject, in the whole pamphlet. Instead the following travesty of Marx's view is given from the Century Dictionary and the Dictionary of Philosophy:—

"THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY assumes that the substance of all things human is wealth, qua its production and distribution; that religion, art, morality, etc., are its accidents, i.e., each and all of their manifestations being traceable directly, or indirectly, to economic causes."

Not satisfied with this piece of trickery, the authoress borrows a falsification from America that consists of substituting the

term "Economic Determinism" for the "Materialistic Conception of History," and then proceeding to demolish the former view, which no Marxian defends, and so avoiding the trouble of meeting the Marxian case at all.

And what does Isabel Kingsley bring against the huge accumulation of facts, the scientific deductions, and the splendid generalisation that supports the Materialist Conception of History? That combination of cheap charlatanism and crude superstition, derived from savages, that is known as Spiritism! After pages of abuse of Marx and the materialist philosophy in general, we are offered as a substitute the sentimental mouthings of old women of both sexes and the superficial conjuring tricks of mediums that Stuart Cumberland says would not obtain a 30s. a week engagement on a music-hall for most of its exponents. What a mouse from such a would-be mountain!

On page 39 the authoress complains that opponents of her case when writing in the *Communist Review* used various epithets as "dangerous," "neurotic ravings," etc., against her views. What does she expect? When a disputant pours out shoals of baseless assumptions, of unsupported assertions, besides indulging in deliberate misrepresentation, as we have shown above, it is a piece of impertinence to expect such a case, or its exponent, to be received with other than ridicule.

A foreword by Florence Baldwin has a "warning" that is the usual stock-in-trade of the parson worsted in a debate:

"None of us," she says, "really knows the truth about ultimate problems, and if we dogmatise about them we may some day find ourselves quite on the wrong road."

When one has recovered from the shock of this awful warning, one may retort that, firstly, the people who are doing the bulk of the dogmatising are the religious and Spiritist advocates who claim to know all about God, Soul, Spirit, Heaven, Hell, and Eternity. The scientist gathers his facts, draws his deductions, and frames his generalisations, but is usually ready to admit that, where his knowledge ends, he does not know. Secondly and of overwhelming importance is the simple truth that while the human race has existed, according to modern authorities, for something like a million years, yet not a single piece of knowledge, not a single fact, has been discovered

that was not a materialist one. We may be on the wrong road, but as it is the only one we, or anyone else, *know*, it would savour of insanity to leave it for the uncouth mumblings and the hysterical promises of the five-shilling medium.

J. FITZGERALD.

## PERSONALITIES AND SOCIALIST POLITICS.

We are constantly told by new readers, especially by members of the Labour Party, that they regret what they call our "personal" attacks on the leaders of other political parties. Many individuals in the Labour Party, who say they want to see the establishment of a Socialist form of society, claim that Socialist educational work would make more rapid headway if those who carry it on would carefully avoid hurting the feelings of workers who have some admiration or liking for their "big men." At the same time it is readily admitted that the actions of these leaders often call for criticism. But our criticism, they say, is not "fair criticism," it is not "helpful" or "encouraging."

In taking up this attitude our critics are showing in fact that their disagreement with our general principles and policy is more fundamental than they imagine. It is essential to our conception of Socialist education that we should continually use the lessons of experience to sap the confidence placed by the workers in their leaders, political or trade union, Liberal, Tory, Labour or Communist; not because those leaders are good, bad or indifferent, but simply because they are leaders. This to a superficial view, and in the eyes of those who unconsciously have in mind the false analogy of the military discipline applied to masses of mechanically-minded soldiers, looks like treachery to the working class, and it is, therefore, our endeavour to show that our attitude is in fact an elementary principle of effective organisation for Socialism.

We are, of course, not alone in attacking the leaders of other organisations, but our methods and our aims in so doing are different from those of our opponents. In the first place it is important to notice that we do not criticise Mr. MacDonald or Mr. Lloyd George on the ground that they are corrupt or incompetent, and that we know some better leaders—ourselves. We have

no leaders in our organisation, and we do not ask you to believe that we can lead you to paradise, if only you will give us your confidence. No one would deny that individuals differ. Some men would readily, and others not so readily, permit themselves to be bribed by "the other side." The influences most likely to affect Mr. Churchill, for instance, would probably make no appeal whatever to Mr. MacDonald. There are men of whom it could safely be said that it is almost inconceivable that they could ever be bribed, either by money, office, "honours," or—perhaps the most seductive attraction of all—even by flattery and the offer of the hospitality and friendship of "society."

But even if we could find leaders who in the accepted sense are incorruptible and possessed of sound judgment, we should still oppose the principle of leadership, and we should still be able to justify ourselves by reference to experience.

The typical feature of leadership is that of a man or woman standing in a position of authority, able in varying degrees to commit those whom he or she represents. Its extreme form exists in military organisation where the authority is almost unquestionable and unlimited. In the labour world it shows itself in the claim made by Labour M.P.'s to vote "as their conscience dictates," i.e., not necessarily as may be required by their Party; and in the practice of refusing trade unionists the right of access to the meetings of their own Executive Committees, and the almost universal custom of conducting negotiations with employers in private. These and other exhibitions of the leadership principle are tolerated by the workers because of their failure to notice two confusions of thought. Military discipline is compulsory on the soldier and is accepted by the workers in general as a necessity, even if an evil. It is truly a necessity—to the ruling class. They need a machine to enforce *their* policy, in defence of *their* interests, and they know no other or better way of organising that machine. They do not imagine that the protection of *their* interests, even to a politically ignorant army, will in itself serve as sufficient inducement to make soldiers sacrifice their lives. But the working class has to learn to organise and struggle for its *own* class interests, and it can only do this for itself. There are no leaders in earth or



heaven who can relieve the workers of the twin difficulties of thinking out working-class policies and organising to achieve them. The first confusion of thought is this one of introducing military conceptions into the social struggle. The army is a force organised from above to fulfil objects to which the units composing the army may well be completely indifferent, if not vaguely hostile. It is directed by political leaders and their officer subordinates, who know precisely what they want done, and have small consideration for the lives or the wishes of those they command, except within the narrow limits of military service. The army is a machine.

The struggle in which the workers are now engaged, and still more the struggle for Socialism, is the struggle of a class for power. It needs organisation, confidence and a comparatively high level of individual knowledge. These things can be won only by the voluntary intelligent co-operation of the workers. Leaders cannot give them, nor act as a substitute for them. The organisation struggling for Socialism must be built and must derive its strength from below, not from above. It must know its own path, and give its own instructions to its own servants, who will be neither ahead nor in the rear of the organisation itself.

This brings us to the second confusion of thought. Owing to their habitual humility towards those in authority, the workers imagine that there is some power and virtue in "office." They think of their Labour M.P. or trade union leader as a being possessed of a power to act existing independently of themselves. There is no such power. The power of the M.P. is ultimately the power he has through his hold over the minds of his electors, that and nothing more. The power of the trade union leader is in you, the members. Bluff may serve occasionally, but everyone knows well enough that the employing class are not bluffed often or for long. It is precisely for this reason that, ever since there was a Labour movement, we have had from the time-honoured but ever juvenile institution called the "Left Wing," a continual chorus of complaint that "our leaders do not lead." They don't "lead" because they realise that life is too precarious for the individual who gets ahead of the main body. Self-preservation can be secured only by preaching as nearly as possible what is

being thought by those who are seeking for guidance. This simple fact that victory or defeats rests finally with the organised workers, and not with their "leaders," justifies our insistence on the need for the rejection of the belief in leadership altogether. Not until that has been done will the workers feel to the full their own individual responsibilities, and the recent general strike would appear to show that the workers are not slow to respond when responsibility clearly falls on them.

In reply to the objection that the workers will make mistakes if not guided by leaders, it is sufficient to point out that their leaders (apart from their own mistakes) are now quite unable to save their members from the latter's mistakes. When the workers feel their responsibility for their own actions, they will at least be able to learn from them, instead of dismissing failure as the fault of this or that leader. Under present methods of organisation leaders, however sound their judgment, can do little to save their members when outside influences are the immediate cause of a wrong policy being followed.

When in 1914 capitalist propaganda stampeded the workers into war fever, the very, very few Labour leaders who were not themselves swept away, could only look on in helpless despair. They could not stop the madness, and they could only take refuge in that deadly pessimism, which views the workers as hopelessly servile and ignorant, incapable of a sustained effort for their own emancipation. This seems to be the fate reserved for those leaders who do not become corrupted by the more common demoralising influences. We all regret the ease with which the workers can be moved by capitalist politicians, but we must point out that every defender of leaders and leadership is himself hindering the development of the minds of the workers to the point at which they will cease to be swayed by any emotional appeal, but will examine every statement critically, and accept no advice merely on the ground of the authoritative position of the leader who offers it.

It was remarked above that our criticism of leaders is different in kind from that of the Labour Party. In the *Daily Herald* (September 17th) an editorial was devoted to abuse of Neville Chamberlain. It was the kind of criticism we consider useless and dangerous to the working class. Chamber-

lain is said to do the "dirty work for the Cabinet," and to like doing it. "He is singularly fitted for the seamy side of state-manship"; he was the "most abject failure of the whole war period"; he has never shown "a spark of ability or kindly human feeling." But for him and a "few of his colleagues there might never have been need of the National Strike." There is a whole column in the same kindly tone, and the editor decides that Chamberlain is "a menace to the whole country," and wants him sacked "to the lasting good of the nation."

This is written according to the rules of the ancient game of politics. It is supposed to be useful and legitimate to denounce your opponents in order to win the votes of the unthinking. Possibly it serves its end, but it does not serve the end of bringing Socialism nearer. It does not hint at the necessity of dispensing with leaders, and it effectively, if not deliberately, obscures the one factor, an understanding of which alone can give meaning and simplicity to politics. It disguises the class nature of government. The capitalists are at present the ruling class. They rule with the object of preserving capitalism and defending their class interests. They govern with the consent of the majority of the workers, that consent being expressed at election times. It is our object to persuade the workers that while capitalism is good for capitalists, only Socialism can serve the interests of the working class. When this is recognised the workers will, instead of giving power to others, use their political power themselves, in order to establish Socialism. For the workers capitalism is the enemy, and Socialism the remedy of working-class economic problems. The *Herald's* criticism of Chamberlain supports those very illusions on which capitalist political control rests. It leads its readers to suppose that all will be well if "good government" replaces "inefficient government," and if a "kindly" Minister of Health replaces one who "has the niggling spirit of the usurer." It fosters the belief that persons are all important and the system a matter of indifference. So long as the workers accept that view, the capitalist class will never have any difficulty in finding politicians able to play the part of "honest Baldwin" or "silent Cal Coolidge" or "clever Lloyd George" or "steady states-

manlike Asquith." As one reputation falls so another rises. "Sack Neville Chamberlain" is the latest expression of a parrot cry which has been directed in turn against almost every Cabinet Minister for generations. Ministers come and go, but the system remains intact. Good government or bad, ministers with kind hearts or ministers with coronets, inefficient or supermen, these are all distinctions of minor concern to the workers. The thing that matters is that every government which administers capitalism does, and must, first and foremost, protect the interests of the capitalist class. Chamberlain's activities are not a menace to the whole country. If they were a menace to capital, Chamberlain would have been dismissed long ago. If he is "kind" to his class, he must be "hard-faced" to ours; if he is a very efficient servant of our masters, so much the worse for us; if he is "niggling" towards workers needing relief to prevent starvation, so much the better for the capitalist taxpayers, who have to meet the cost of maintaining the derelicts of their profit-making system.

We are not much concerned with Neville Chamberlain's personal merits, although it is highly improbable that he is such a villain as the *Herald* chooses to paint him. We are concerned with getting the workers to see that Chamberlain stands for capitalism, and is, therefore, bound to act contrary to working-class interests. This the *Herald* does not do.

We point out further that, if he were an angel, he could not do for the workers anything material to improve their condition inside capitalism or to bring about Socialism. This applies equally to every leader of whatever political colour or personal quality. It includes Labour, Communist, and trade union organisations, and is our justification for our attitude. We claim that our criticism of leaders and leadership is necessary, and that unlike the *Herald's* abuse of Chamberlain, it is based upon and helps to illustrate the basic principles of Socialism.

H.

#### A CORRECTION.

An error was overlooked in the Editorial, "The Miners' Position," in our September issue. The amount of profit mentioned in column 1, page 9, lines 7 and 8, should read "one million three hundred thousand pounds," not "thirteen million pounds."



## THE WAGES QUESTION AT THE TRADES UNION CONGRESS.

Mr. Pugh, in his presidential address to the Trades Union Congress, was no more practical in his ideas than presidents of former years have been. Ideals, platitudes and "philosophy" are poor stuff for those workers whose time is mainly taken up in the struggle to obtain a living. Such men and women need a message that is easily understood; one that explains the nature of their struggle; why they are poor; how they can free themselves from their poverty.

Sentimental ideals are useless when the business is to explain to the workers why it is that, although they produce the wealth, they remain poor. If Mr. Pugh once admits that the possession of wealth by a class that does not work can only be the result of robbery or exploitation of the class that does; the next obvious thing is to explain how the exploitation is effected. This may, or may not, be beyond Mr. Pugh, but it is part of the knowledge required by the workers before it is possible for them to take any steps to shake off their poverty.

Mr. Pugh, in his remarks, associated himself with the campaign of the Independent Labour Party for a living wage. Marx, Engels, Kautsky, and others, have repeatedly shown that the wages system is the basis of capitalism. The capitalist buys labour power and pockets the difference between the value of the workers' product and the wage he pays them. It is obvious, therefore, that while the wages system remains, exploitation must continue. Notwithstanding this fact, which shows the necessity for the abolition of the wages system, Mr. Pugh can only suggest to the Congress that they should "examine in the light of new theories the whole basis and application of the traditional wages policy and methods of determining wages which the trade unions have followed."

Whatever Mr. Pugh's "new theories" may be, he will discover when he comes to apply them that trade unions can only "determine" wages in their favour when they have the power to inflict loss on the employers by withholding their labour power. The strike is the most effective weapon possessed by the organised workers. The anarchists and industrial unionists advocate other methods, though they have never proved their efficacy, and Mr. Pugh

would doubtless hesitate to learn from such sources. True the strike is seldom successful to-day, because circumstances are rarely favourable to the workers. Even when they are, the treachery of their own leaders often baulks them of victory.

The struggle between capitalists and workers over wages is a one-sided business; the capitalists are easily the stronger. They do not feel the pinch of hunger while their mines or factories are closed down. They have always the armed forces of the State on their side to compel the workers to starve in an orderly manner. With the miners loc-out and a farcical general strike hanging over the Congress like a wet blanket, emphasising the impotence of the workers when pitted against the capitalists, Mr. Pugh romances about laying down "scientific principles for the division of the product of industry."

Such talk is childish while the capitalist method of division holds the field, and the capitalist class controls the educational and physical forces necessary for its maintenance. Such principles could only be applied with the consent of the ruling class, which is inconceivable, unless it were along the lines of Mr. Pugh's last suggestion, which is as follows: "The equitable distribution of spending power in relation to family needs."

If the idea is to take from the Rothschilds, Fords, Leverhulmes, etc., in order to level up the cotton operatives and miners, how is it proposed to squeeze the former? If the idea is merely to pool wages, salaries, etc., without an increase of the total amount, there is nothing to prevent trade union leaders and Labour M.P.'s starting right away.

It is only because these leaders are separated so widely from the rank and file, and the circumstances of their everyday life, that they can talk such nonsense without fear of exposure. The unreality of the whole business in its relation to the workers is emphasised by the *New Leader* (10/9/26), which comments on the address as follows: "He gave in short an enlightened lead to the industrial movement, which we have every hope that it will follow by setting up a commission of inquiry."

Needless to say, neither the commission—the orthodox capitalist method of shelving awkward questions—the General Council, nor the T.U.C., will follow up the

subject by analysing the capitalist system and laying bare the facts of their exploitation before the workers. Working-class leaders are after positions with high wages; they will never tell the workers that they must abolish the wages system.

F. F.

## PARTY ACTIVITIES.

During recent months we have been able to open three new branches (Becontree, Hull, and Paddington), and there is every prospect that in several other new and old centres branches will be opened in the near future. An active campaign is being carried on in Yorkshire to make the literature of the Party more widely known. Sympathisers in Sheffield and Derby who would like to co-operate in the eventual formation of branches are urged to communicate with us. Members and sympathisers living in other districts where branches do not yet exist should consult us as to possibilities of increasing our sales of literature. Conditions now are in many respects particularly favourable, and with the active support of all members we may hope to see further gratifying results of our work in past years. It is hoped that branches which have recently not been able to maintain their former degree of activity will be encouraged to further efforts. We would again point out that the more rapid spread of our influence is continually impeded by lack of funds. London readers are reminded that Sunday evening discussions will be held regularly at the Emily Davison Club Rooms, 144, High Holborn, W.C., commencing October 3rd, at 7.30 p.m.

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The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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**The Socialist Standard,**

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1926

**THE DEATH OF COMRADE ALEXANDER ANDERSON.**

It is with profound regret we have to inform our readers that, after a long and distressing illness, our old comrade, Alexander Anderson, died on September 16th, at the age of 48. He was one of that determined few who in 1904 made history by founding the Socialist Party of Great Britain. During the twenty-two years of our existence his loyalty to the Party and to the working class has been steadfast and unwavering. A born orator, he was never happier than when on the platform, expounding our position, or riddling that of our opponents. Hundreds attended the funeral at Tottenham Cemetery, and a short address was made on behalf of the Party. To those who did not know our comrade, a pen portrait would convey little, and to those who knew him it would be sadly inadequate. It is at intimate, human moments such as these that we realise how much is embraced in the term "Comrade." There is an old and hackneyed saying that in death all men are equal. It is our late comrade's chiefest glory that his life-long efforts were directed towards the achievement by mankind of equality in life. He died a member of the Party he helped to found. We tender to his wife and children the warmest sympathy of the whole Party.

We print the following letter from Com-

rade Jacomb as a personal tribute from an old Comrade in the Cause:—

Comrades Editors of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD,—Will you kindly allow me, as one of the "old originals," a little space in which to pay my humble tribute to the memory of our departed comrade, Alexander Anderson?

I have never taken up my pen in greater sadness of heart than I do to write these lines—which, I suppose, is natural in one paying his last respects to an old friend and comrade with whom he has worked for nearly a quarter of a century in such a cause as Socialism.

Those members who have joined the Party during the last few years, and to whom Anderson can hardly be more than a tradition, can have no conception of what he was in the time of his virile strength. In outdoor propaganda work he gave of his best with a lavish freedom which has had tragic results. For years, almost without a break, he addressed several meetings a week. It was no unusual thing for him to be speaking for six or eight hours on a Sunday, and he has at times started to address a meeting before noon and carried on into the small hours of the following day. In debate he was a giant, as many a capitalist henchman discovered to his cost; and in the Party councils he was a force of the first magnitude.

Indeed, it is more for his labours and ability in the internal affairs of the Party that his older comrades will treasure his memory. It was there that his light shone clearest. Particularly does the present scribe recall how, when the Party was new, and strong men were striving to shape it each in accordance with his own conception of what was best, he stood his ground beneath attacks from our opponents of such bitterness as would have overwhelmed most men. He fought back, and stuck it out with a firmness which could only compel admiration.

Anderson was a great fighter, and had the qualities in abundance of a great fighter. He also had the faults of those qualities, and these, naturally enough, did not tend to make what is called in the ordinary way a lovable nature. Therefore it speaks all the more eloquently of his merit and value in the sphere in which he did his life's work that those who were most often opposed to him feel his loss most poignantly.

I am not claiming any martyrdom for Anderson's life. If ever a man was happy in the work he had put his hand to, that man was Anderson. But I do think that it is incumbent upon his comrades, in fairness to his children and to that splendid comrade, his wife, who for so many years buckled on his armour and sent him forth fit to the fight, to acknowledge that, so far as human intelligence can judge, his strenuous struggle for the emancipation of his class was the direct cause of his early breakdown and death. His breakdown was a serious blow to the working class, as his death is an infliction to his comrades.

The Party has lost a great asset, and is poorer therefor. The more reason, then, for redoubled effort. If he could give us a message now, it would be this prosaic one—"Get on with it."

Yes, comrades; in memory of Alexander Anderson, let us get on with it.

A. E. JACOMB.

**INDIVIDUALISM AND SOCIAL EVOLUTION.**

The channels of propaganda open to the defenders of the present system of society are enormous. Apart from their control of "Education," with its distortion of history, their Press, with its daily circulation of millions, would enable them—if they had an answer to the Socialist attitude—to cancel any effort the latter could make.

Their inability to keep the workers in the ignorant and docile state that they desire is demonstrated on the one hand by the steady growth of understanding among the working class of their common interest, and the fading of their prejudice against the propaganda of Socialism. And on the other hand by the panic that is exhibited on certain occasions by the Capitalist Class, breaking out in all manner of forms, and giving further evidence of the hopeless case they have to handle.

Their latest attempt to check the growth of working-class enlightenment is the formation of a company, with £20,000 capital, called "The Individualist Bookshop, Ltd."

The *Daily News* (15/7/26), in giving particulars of this company, tells us that:

"The object of the company is to provide a London bookshop, where the Individualist as opposed to the Socialist point of view will be expressed in various ways."

"Only books free from what the promoters consider the unsound economic theories of Socialism will be sold."

"It will collect books on economic subjects written from the Individualist point of view; promote the publication of such books; provide a reference library for the use of students; establish a circulating library, and organise lectures."

An "Individualist Bookshop" that is a limited company would make even its founders laugh, if the concern to save their skins did not prevent them seeing the joke.

But apart from the stupid title of this company, with its £20,000 capital, described by Sir Ernest Benn, who is largely responsible for its formation, as a "modest beginning," let us take a book from the shelf of this peculiar shop, and examine it.

The first point that strikes us is, that before the book could be produced, a written language was necessary, and before this language could be written it was developed in an oral form. This, articulate speech, commencing with man in his most primitive state, is his earliest effort to lift himself above an individualist and animal existence and become a social being. Speech, which is of necessity social, emphasises the distinction between man and the lower forms of life.

During a period of thousands of years, and by the co-operation of unnumbered people, was produced the dialects out of which have grown the modern languages of to-day.

From the spoken to the written word there is again an enormous period of time, extending over thousands of years, from the early savage to the dawn of civilisation. This fact gives us an idea of the countless number of people who contributed to the production of writing from the hieroglyphics to the alphabets now in use.

Another factor needed in the production of this book is the printing press, which has been made possible by inventions which carry us back to savagery. The discovery of the use of fire by the early savage, and later in the next period the production of iron, are inventions which, apart from the influence they had on the state of society in which they were discovered, are still in the twentieth century needed to produce the modern printing machine, which owes its existence to the work, thought, and co-operation of thousands of generations of people.

This simple little book not only represents



the accumulation of knowledge through the ages from earliest man to the present day, but is also in the modern sense a social product.

The miners that secure the various minerals, viz., coal, iron, and copper; the lumbermen who fell the trees; the transport workers who convey this material to the mills and factories where other workers await to convert it into the numerous forms needed to produce this "individualist" book, such as the machinery that reduces the giant of the forest into pulp for paper, the circular saw that rips others into planks, the printing press and the tools used for its production, are all necessary to make this book. Then the workers in the building trade erect the factory, and the different branches of the printing industry commence operations.

With this vast army of workers the picture is not complete. The farm labourer, the miller, and the baker; the weaver, and the tailor; the tanner, and the bootmaker are needed to supply this industrial army with food and clothing. We see, therefore, that in the production of a simple article, not only must the individual take part as a social unit in that work, but that each industry is dependent upon many others, a dependence that often extends beyond national boundaries.

Without the accumulated knowledge of the past, and the social activities of the present wage workers, Sir E. Benn and his friends would be climbing among the branches of trees and living their individualist life on nuts and roots.

We have seen that speech was man's first step forward. This implies the common acceptance of certain sounds to mean certain things. As the language developed, the rules governing it grew and changed in proportion, and now to speak a language we must learn and obey the rules that control it. This is generally accepted, and even the Anarchist falls into line without an ungrammatical curse at the necessity of so doing.

As the rules alter with the development of a language, so with society. The rules and regulations are changed as the methods of producing wealth and the character of its ownership changes, and creates new needs and interests, and makes old laws and customs obsolete.

In their early days the Capitalist Class forced the development of society forward

at a rapid pace; institutions that stood in the way were crushed out of existence. The Handicraftman and the Trade Guilds could not survive against the competition of factory production, made possible by the development of machinery and the use of steam power. With these changes the worker lost his individual character as a producer and became a social unit.

The rapid growth of capitalist production with the concentration of capital into fewer hands have forced these concerns beyond their individual control. Nationalisation or joint stock companies managed by a staff of wage slaves takes their place. The average capitalist draws his dividend without knowing anything of the business he owns shares in, and in many cases does not know where his money is invested. By the manipulation on the Stock Exchange he can go to bed owning an interest in one part of the world and wake up to find that interest transferred to another concern thousands of miles away.

While taking no part in production, but owning the wealth that is produced, the Capitalist Class find the task of concealing their useless nature from the workers becomes more difficult. With the distinction between the non-producing owners and the propertyless workers becoming clearer as the system develops, its defenders are alarmed at the growth of the propaganda that points these facts out to the workers and which explains that as their trouble is the lack of the wealth which they produce in abundance, the remedy is to abolish the system which enables this useless class to rob them of the fruits of their labour. This implies a change in the form of ownership from private to common. The conditions are ripe for this change, which can be accomplished when a majority of the workers know what they need and how to get it.

Recognising that the confusion of the working class is one safeguard against the overthrow of Capitalism and the establishment of Socialism, these defenders of the present system raise the cry of individualism to defend a form of society based on social production, and in which the exploitation of the workers by the capitalist has lost its individual character and become one of class robbery.

For the same reason they welcome confusionists like Ramsay MacDonald, who, speaking at the "Christian Endeavour Con-

vention," says, "You are fashioning the world into the likeness which is in your soul" (*Daily News*, 22'6/1926).

But such nonsense, which would disgrace a village parson, will have no effect on the workers when they know what they fashion neither a world nor a system in either their mind or "soul," but that the means of wealth production prevailing when the present system of society ends will form the starting-point or foundation in the one that follows. Also that the character of the ownership of the social wealth and the manner in which it is produced determine the nature of the class struggle. And, further, that the political institutions necessary to maintain the present system offers to the modern wage workers the means to end it and establish Socialism.

Securing political power, they will overthrow the Capitalist Class and establish a system of common ownership in harmony with social production.

The Socialist, therefore, while recognising the causes of social development, does not ignore the human factor, but gives it its true value. By this means he avoids the pitfalls of the Utopian, who builds castles in the air or "fashions a world" with his "soul" for a pattern. But, acting in conformity with the knowledge obtained from a correct conception of history, he carries on the class struggle, knowing that this war, fought out by an enlightened working class, must end in their emancipation from the present degrading position of slavery. E. L.

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## THE TWILIGHT OF CHRISTIANITY.

If you increase the sum of twopence 50 per cent., you get threepence. But if you reduce threepence by 50 per cent., you get threeha'pence. Simple, isn't it! Everybody knows that, of course. Do they? There were some hundreds of innocent workmen who did not know it during the war, and when wages began to fall, and the same percentages were taken off as were put on, it was a long while before many made the discovery. We simply refer to the matter now so that the trickiness of percentages may be perceived. For instance, when the readers of the *Daily News* saw the result of their Religious Questionnaire announced in huge block letters, "70 per cent. strictly orthodox," what did they gather? Very little reflection would have taught them much. Did they do that little?

The *Daily News* has upwards of 700,000 readers. For a fortnight they were daily urged to answer a series of questions, designed to find out the extent of their religious belief. Fifteen thousand, or 2 per cent., replied; 98 per cent. did not. So that the heavily loaded 70 per cent. is only 70 per cent. of 2 per cent. In the quieter regions of ordinary type, the *Daily News* Editorial sees this objection, and, whilst regretting the paucity of the poll, is of the opinion that, like the deep-sea drag-net, its contents are tolerably representative. We beg to differ. The analogy is not a good one. This was not a shot in the dark as the heaving of a deep-sea drag-net would be. This was a sustained appeal, in a prominent daily paper with a pronounced Nonconformist flavour, to its readers to testify that their belief in Christianity was a real, live thing. And for every 2 that answered, 98 did not. Innumerable preachers and teachers made it the theme of their sermons. The interest, we were assured, was widespread. And only two in each hundred answered. So that the heavy heading, "70 per cent. strictly orthodox," is only part of the sum. A more cumbersome, but possibly more truthful, heading would have read, "98 per cent. indifferent, 2 per cent. muddled." Yes, muddled; for whilst 70 per cent. of this tiny fraction are described as strictly orthodox, only 38 per cent. accept the first chapter of Genesis. Further, there were 1,500 more persons who were active members of Churches than



believe in the formulated tenets of any Church. Again, "a number declaring themselves active Church members confess to a disbelief in a personal God."

So that muddled seems the mildest word to describe them. And if the first chapter of Genesis is dubious, what of the second and third. If the Fall of Man is a fable, where is the necessity for a Redeemer, a Reconciler, an Atonement, and all the other things with capital letters that hinge upon the Fall.

We may reasonably admit that a plebiscite of this sort has but a limited utility. As an indication of the trend of current thought it is interesting without being valuable. Its significance lies in its being held at all. If the Christian religion were the great factor its adherents claim, a plebiscite would be superfluous. One does not take votes on the self-evident, the universally obvious. We assume, therefore, that a vote was taken because the connection between religion and behaviour is not apparent to ordinary observation. If an impartial, uninformed observer were to try and discover the connection between the philosophy "Blessed be ye poor" and the Bishop of London's £10,000 a year, or the slow, brutal, relentless crushing of the miners, and the Church's £300,000 coal royalties, or the message of "Peace on earth, good-will toward men," with the Christian Church's attitude during the War, or all the contrasts of riches and poverty, magnificence and squalor, satiety and sheer hunger, wisdom and pathetic ignorance, contained within modern society, with the Gospel of Love, would he not be bewildered? If he were told our morals rested upon a basis explained to him as the Christian religion, would not his bewilderment increase?

No! We think the true lesson to be gathered from the Questionnaire is that the average man is indifferent to the Christian religion. To openly avow oneself free from traditional superstition requires a definite effort and often some courage. The average man declines to make that effort. He finds indifference more comfortable. Indifference may not be definite disbelief, but it is nearer to that than to Christianity. How often do people refer to their God for guidance in their daily lives? In business matters, which gives them the greater concern, God's blessing or the solvency of their customer?

The literature of former periods is filled

with constant references to God. Even Acts of Parliament describe natural happenings as acts of God. If a battle was victorious, thanks were duly rendered to God. If a king escaped assassination, again to God the praise. The hand of God was seen everywhere, in the most trivial as in the most momentous happenings. The common people thanked Him ceremoniously at every meal, the uncommon people whenever worship could be combined with display.

As an instance of the change that has taken place, perhaps we cannot do better than quote the *Daily News* itself, the very issue following its comments on the Questionnaire, that of September 13th. The Editorial is commenting upon the escape of Mussolini from assassination, thus:

"God has saved Italy," begins the Fascist order of the day, recounting Mussolini's escape. It is an exaggeration. What happened was that a delay time fuse saved Signor Mussolini."

We can ignore the subtle sarcasm wherein Mussolini is reminded that he is not Italy. Such distinctions are not stressed nearer home. But even the orthodox *Daily News* is compelled to admit that a murder was averted, not by the intervention of God, but by the breakdown of a piece of mechanism. And so we find with man's advance in knowledge and his consequent control of natural forces, God becomes ever more nebulous, and religion a matter of husk-like forms. Even the so-called act of God is practically confined to strokes of lightning, and the lightning conductor makes His task ever more difficult.

W. T. H.

### STOCKPORT.

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## MATERIALISM AND ART.

By GEORGE PLECHANOFF.

(Continued from last month.)

### PART II.

Let's go further. In discussing imitation, we mention as directly opposing it the inclination of contradiction.

This should be studied carefully.

We know what an important rôle the "beginning of antithesis" plays in the feelings of men and animals, according to Darwin.

Certain states of mind lead, as we have seen in the last chapter, to certain habitual movements which were primarily, or may still be, of service; and we shall find that when a directly opposite state of mind is induced there is a strong and involuntary tendency to the performance of movements of a directly opposite nature, though these have never been of any service.<sup>1</sup>

Darwin brings many examples which convincingly show that "with the beginning of antithesis" very much is explained in the expression of feelings. We ask: Is its action visible in the origin and development of customs?

When a dog throws himself on his back before his master, then his pose, combining all that is possible to think of as a contradiction to antagonism or resistance, is an expression of obedience. The beginning of antithesis is obvious here. That is also seen in the case described by the traveller Burton. The negroes of the Vuaniamuazi tribe, passing by the village inhabited by their enemies, carry no weapons, so as not to inspire a quarrel. Nevertheless in their homes, where they are comparatively out of danger, every one of them is armed at least with a club.<sup>2</sup> If, remarks Darwin, a dog turns on its maw, as if to say to his master, "Look, I am your servant," then the Vuaniamuazi negro, disarming when it seems he should be armed, in the same way tells his enemy: "The thought of self-defence is far away from me; I wholly rely upon your generosity."

In both cases there is the same meaning and the same expression, i.e., expression through action, directly contrary to the one which would be inevitable in a case where

instead of obedience, inimical intentions existed.

In customs serving to express grief there is also evident the beginning of antithesis. According to Du Shalie, in Africa after the death of a man who had occupied an important place in his tribe, many negroes attire themselves in *dirty clothes*.<sup>3</sup> David and Charles Livingstone say that a negress never leaves home without ornaments *except on those occasions when she is clad in mourning*.<sup>4</sup> In the negro tribe of Niam Niam, when a relative dies the near survivors cut off their hair, as a sign of grief.<sup>5</sup>

In all those cases the emotion is expressed by an action *contrary to the one which is considered useful or agreeable in the normal course of life*. And if there are many such cases to be pointed out, then it is clear that a great number of customs owe their origin to the action of the beginning of antithesis. And if this is clear, then we can suppose that the development of our æsthetic conceptions is also accomplished under its influence.

In Senegambi rich negresses wear slippers, which are so small that the foot does not go in fully, with the result that these dames are distinguished by a very awkward gait. But this awkward gait is considered extremely attractive.<sup>6</sup> How could it become such? In order to understand this, it is necessary first of all to remark that the poor, working negresses don't wear the above-mentioned slippers and have an ordinary gait. It is impossible for them to walk as the rich coquettes do, because it would cause a loss of time. And it is only on account of this distinction that the awkward gait of the rich women is so attractive; time is not valuable to them, for they are released from the necessity of work. In itself this gait has no sense or value, but becomes significant only in its force of contrast to the gait of the working woman.

<sup>3</sup> Voyage and Adventures in Equatorial Africa. (P. 268.)

<sup>4</sup> Exploration du Zambese et de ses affluents, Paris, 1866. (P. 109.)

<sup>5</sup> Schweiffurth; In the Heart of Africa, v. 2. (P. 33.)

<sup>6</sup> L. J. B. Berenger-Ferand. Les peuplades de la Senegambie. Paris, 1879. (P. 11.)

<sup>1</sup> "Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals." (P. 50.)

<sup>2</sup> Voyage aux grands lacs de l'Afrique orientale, Paris, 1862. (P. 610.)



The beginning of antithesis is obvious here, but notice that it is called forth by the existence of inequality in property among the negroes of Senegambi.

Let's recall what we said earlier about the morals of the English nobility during the Restoration of the Stuarts, and you will agree that the inclination to contradiction displays a peculiar reaction in the *social psychology* of Darwin's beginning of antithesis. Such virtues as industriousness, temperance, strictness of family morals, etc., were very necessary for the bourgeoisie, whose aim was to occupy a much higher social and political position. But were the vices contrary to the bourgeois virtues necessary for the struggling nobility? No, these vices sprang up not as a means of struggle for existence, but as a psychological result of this struggle: hating the revolutionary inclinations of the bourgeoisie, the nobility began to feel a disgust also toward their virtues and therefore began to demonstrate vices just the contrary. The action of the beginning of antithesis also in this case was brought on by social causes.<sup>7</sup>

It is known from the history of English literature how strongly the psychological action of the beginning of antithesis, brought about by class-struggle, has reflected itself upon the æsthetic conceptions of the upper classes of society. The English aristocracy who lived in France during their exile, became acquainted with the French theatre and literature which presented a standard quite singular in character, and in its way the product of the refined aristocracy and therefore suited more to their own aristocratic tendencies, than the English literature and theatre of the Elizabethan age. After the Restoration, French tastes began to predominate on the English stage and in English literature. Shakespeare began to be treated as the French treated him afterwards, as strongly holding to classical traditions, that is as a "drunken savage." His "Romeo and Juliet" was considered then as bad; "A Midsummer Night's Dream"—"foolish and ridiculous"; "Henry VIII" was found

too "naive"; "Othello"—"mediocre." Such criticism of Shakespeare does not fully disappear even in the next century. Hume thought that Shakespeare's genius seemed large in the same way that all ugly, disproportionately built bodies seem large. He blames the dramatist for his total ignorance of all theatrical art and conduct.

Pope regretted that Shakespeare wrote for the people and did without the protection of his prince and the encouragement of court. Even the famous Garrick, the worshipper of Shakespeare, tried to ennoble his "idol" in his performance of the gravedigger; to "King Lear" he added a happy conclusion. But the democratic part of the public in the English theatres continued to feel the deepest devotion to Shakespeare. Garrick confessed that in changing Shakespeare's plays he risked a wild protest from this part of the public.

His French friends paid him compliments in their letters regarding the "courage" with which he met the danger; "Car je connais la populace Anglaise," adds one of them.

The licentiousness of manners of the nobility of the second half of the seventeenth century was reflected, as is known, on the English stage where it took indeed extreme measures. According to Edward Engels, comedies written in England between 1660 and 1690 almost all without exception belong to the domain of pornography.<sup>8</sup> After all this we can say *a priori*, that sooner or later in England, at the beginning of this antithesis, the appearance of dramatic productions whose main aim would be the representation and exaltation of bourgeois virtues was inevitable.

As far as it is known, Hippolyte Taine noticed and more ingeniously than others emphasised the significance of this in the history of æsthetic conceptions.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Beljam, (Pp 40-41.) Compare Taines, (Pp. 503-512.)

<sup>9</sup> About this see an interesting investigation by J. J. Jusserand, "Shakespeare en e sous-Pancien regime." 1698. (Pp. 247-248.)

<sup>10</sup> Geschichte der englischen Litteratur. 3 Auflage. Leipzig, 1897. (S. 264.)

<sup>11</sup> Tarde had a wonderful occasion to examine the psychological action of this beginning in his book, "L'Opposition universelle, essai d'une theorie des Contraires," which came out in 1897. But for some reason he did not make use of it, and limited it with only few remarks about the indicated action. It is true, Tarde says, (P. 245) that his book is not a socio-

<sup>7</sup> It is necessary also to remark that only because of their social position the nobility could put their brilliant vices against the common virtues of the bourgeoisie. In the psychology of the struggling peasantry or proletarian class the action of the beginning of antithesis could have been displayed in the same fashion.

In his illuminating and interesting "Voyage aux Pyrennees" he related a talk with one of his "table neighbours," Mr. Paul, because it adequately expressed the author's point of view.

"You go to Versailles," says Mr. Paul, "and are perturbed by the seventeenth century tastes. But cease for a moment to judge from the point of view of your own needs and your own habits. . . . We are right when we are charmed by a wild landscape, as they were right when such a landscape seemed tedious. There was nothing uglier than this mountain for the people of the seventeenth century.<sup>12</sup> It evoked many unpleasant pictures. People who only recently lived through the epoch of Civil Wars, and semi-barbarism, in view of this mountain, called to mind hunger, long rides on horseback under snow and rain, black bread half mixed with husk, served always in dirty, greasy hotels. They were tired of barbarism, just as we are tired of civilisation. These mountains give us a chance of retreat from our pavements, offices and stores. This is the only reason why you like this landscape and if it were not for this reason it would seem to you as ugly as it once seemed to Madame Mentenon."<sup>13</sup>

We like the wild landscape as a contrast to city views, of which we are tired. City landscapes and trimmed gardens were liked by the people of the seventeenth century as a contrast to a wild site. The action "of the beginning of antithesis" is here undoubtedly patent. But just because there is no doubt, it clearly shows us to what extent psychological laws can serve as a source of explanation of the history of ideology in general and of the history of æsthetics in particular. The beginning of antithesis played an important rôle in the psychology of the people of the seventeenth century, as it plays an important rôle in the psychology of contemporaries. Why then are our æsthetic tastes contrary to the tastes of the seventeenth century? Because we live in an environment entirely different. Therefore we come to the known conclusion:

logical treatise, but even in a treatise especially devoted to sociology, he certainly could not have mastered this subject had he not gotten rid of his idealistic view.

<sup>12</sup> We must have in mind that the conversation is carried on in the Pyrenées.

<sup>13</sup> Voyage aux Pyrenées cinquieme edition. Paris, 1867.

the psychological nature of man makes it so that he can have æsthetic conceptions, and that Darwin's *beginning of antithesis* (Hegel's "contradiction") plays an immense rôle, to this time unappreciated in the mechanism of those conceptions. But why does the given man have only these and not other tastes; why does he like only these and not other things?—this depends upon his environment. The illustration given by Taine also shows well the character of those conditions; how the social conditions determine the nature and course of man's culture.

The illustration by Taine shows social conditions, as a cause that makes the fundamental laws of our psychology, but in this illustration the discourse is only about our relations to the impressions made by nature. But the fact is that the influence of such impressions changes in accordance with our own relations to the change in nature, and our own relationship is determined by the course of development of our social culture.

As an example Taine gives a landscape. It is to be remarked that in the history of painting a landscape in general takes a place far from perpetual. Michel Angelo and his contemporaries neglected it. It developed in Italy only at the end of the Renaissance, at the moment of its decay. Also for the French artists of the seventeenth and eighteenth century it had no substantial meaning. In the nineteenth century this is abruptly changed; the landscape is beginning to be esteemed for the sake of a landscape, and such young painters as Fleur, Kaba, Th. Reausseau seek for inspiration at the bosom of nature, in the outskirts of Paris, in Fauntenebleau, and in Medon; the possibility of such inspiration was not suspected by the painters at the time of Le Brens and Bouche. Why? Because the social conditions of France changed and as a result the psychology of the French changed. And in various epochs of social development man gets for nature different impressions, for he looks upon them from different points of view.

The action of general laws on the psychical nature of man do not cease, of course, with only those epochs. But, as in various epochs, in consequence of variety in social relations, since different materials come into human minds, it is not strange that the results of its finish are different.

Translated for "Modern Quarterly" by Bessie Peretz.  
(To be concluded).



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- EDINBURGH.**—Communications to Andrew Porter, 12a, Kings-rd., Portobello.
- GLASGOW.**—Communications to Sec., J. Higgins, 316, Rutherglen-rd., Oatlands, Glasgow.
- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Saturdays, 7 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare Street, Hackney. Discussions after Branch Business. Communications to Secretary at above address.
- HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock St., Hanley, Staffs. Open to all.
- HULL.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Tuesday in the month at The Institute, Co-operative Society, Ltd., Albion Street, Hull. Communications to G. Vinegrad at above address.
- ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to N. A. Bishop, 39, Poyning-rd., N.19.
- LEYTON.**—Communications to A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.
- PADDINGTON.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at Emanuel Church Hall, Harrow Road, near "The Prince of Wales." Communications to G. Shears, 200, Shirland Road, Paddington, W.9.
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Communications to Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea.
- TOOTING.**—Sec., A. Yeomans, 15, University-rd., Collier's Wood, S.W.19. Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary, 17, Antil-road, Broad Lane, Tottenham, N.17. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce-grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.
- WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Thursdays at 8.30 p.m. No.1 Room, Labour Club, Clarendon Road.
- WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.
- WOOD GREEN.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

### OBJECT.

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

### Declaration of Principles.

#### THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

##### HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

No. 267. Vol. 23.]

LONDON, NOVEMBER, 1926.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## THE PRINCIPLES OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY.

A few weeks ago a member of this organisation attended a meeting of the I.L.P., with the object of selling some literature. While engaged in this nefarious project, he was accosted by the secretary of the branch holding the meeting, to whom he had previously sold a copy of our pamphlet on "Socialism."

"Ah," exclaimed the independent labourer. "I've been reading your pamphlet and I take it that it represents the official views of your party."

Our comrade admitted that this was the case.

"Well," continued the humble follower of Ramsay Mac., "It appears that between us lies the cloven hoof. We are a constitutional body, whereas you have no hope, except in violence."

The Socialist thereupon produced a copy of the pamphlet, and asked for proof of the statement. (You may have noticed that this is a nasty dogmatic habit which Socialists have.) His critic hesitated, and then admitted that he was unable to lay his finger on any particular statement, but that he had gathered the general impression by reading between the lines. The next move, however, was decisive.

Turning the inside of the cover, the hardened revolutionist pointed out that the sixth clause of our Declaration, and asked what impression that conveyed. The answer was that it was a clear statement of the Socialist position.

Incidents like the above illustrate the value of the Declaration for the critic referred to went on to express the wish that the Labour Party had a similar pronouncement, and actually let fall the damning admission that if it had it would lose a large percentage of its members!

The Declaration forms the basis of mem-

bership of the Party. Only those who accept and conform in political practice thereto become and remain members. Thus is the Socialist character of the Party preserved, and a weapon provided with which to flay any rash opponent who endeavours to misrepresent its object or policy.

Let us then turn our attention to its clauses seriatim in the hope that the reader may appreciate their accuracy, and throw in his lot with us in the task of spreading the knowledge they express.

Heading the Declaration is a definition of Socialism, the object of the Party:—A system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments of wealth production, etc. This raises in the mind of the reader the question, is it possible to change the basis of society in the manner proposed and, if possible, is it necessary?

In spite of the wide-spread acceptance of the theory of evolution, many people still retain a belief in "eternal truth" where social institutions are concerned. "What is, always has been, and always will be," is their creed in reference to the relationship between rich and poor. Yet a study of history reveals the fact that here, as elsewhere, constant change obtains.

This failure to see the facts arises largely from the interested propaganda of the present ruling-class, but is also due to the circumstance that the workers have not yet consciously grasped the basic importance of the instruments of labour and their evolution.

If one could transplant an African savage to the heart of London, he would be, not merely bewildered, but terrified at the population and the mechanical contrivances by which he was surrounded. Similarly, a Cockney in the heart of the bush, experi-



ences dismay at the desolation and crudity of savage existence. Yet it is a matter of history that these two states of human life have been bridged in the course of centuries.

Two thousand years ago, our ancestors struggled for life in barbaric obscurity. Their means of obtaining food, shelter and clothing were of the most primitive description when contrasted with those in use at present yet even they represented thousands of years of painful experience and development.

This development can be divided into several fairly well-defined stages. Thus the discovery of fire, the invention of the arts of smelting and pottery-making, the domestication of animals and plants, the invention of the plough and the substitution of slavery for cannibalism, mark epochs in social growth. The changes in the mode of life resulted in the expansion and internal development of the social groups which, until the dawn of history, were small and narrowly exclusive in their customs and outlook.

Up till then kinship, rather than property, was the basis of the group and its institutions were communal in character. A crude instinctive equality coupled with hostility to strangers marked the relationship between the kinsfolk. Yet the very conception of kinship was itself the product of ages of experiment in trying to control the sexual aspect of human life. So long as sexual relations were promiscuous, descent could not be definitely determined. Among such primitive beings as the Australian blacks, however, intercourse is restricted to the members of certain groups, and the narrowing of the group up to the point where the clan (or gens) emerges, forms the general tendency of social development in pre-historic races. (The reader cannot do better than consult Morgan's "Ancient Society," and Engel's "Origin of the Family," for details on this point.)

The driving force behind this change was the gradual division of labour, first as between the sexes, secondly as between members of the same sex and tribe. As mankind forsook their primitive homes, the forests, and spread over the plains and along the rivers, hunting and fishing, a more regular social discipline became necessary than had hitherto obtained. Men became the breadwinners, women the homemakers. With the adoption of a pastoral

mode of life, and the use of metals for the protection of the flocks and herds against wild beasts, special crafts, such as that of the smith, arose. Finally, with the beginnings of agriculture, the establishment of slavery completed the foundation of the complex hierarchy of occupations on which arose the first class-society, the City-Empires of ancient history.

From that point onward, kinship commenced to wane as a social bond. It survived in a class-form (i.e., aristocracy), based upon property in land. For the mass of the population it had ceased to count. Only the rich had ancestors and were men of family. Patricians, plebs and slaves gave way to nobles, burghers and serfs until, with the increase of trade and the response of industrial development, modern society, founded upon wage-labour, arose.

It is not the writer's immediate purpose to describe how each successive change took place; the point to be emphasised is that a variety of social forms have preceded that which exists to-day, that society is no solid crystal, the structure of which only fools would challenge.

The Socialist has all human experience at the back of his statement that a change in the economic basis of society, and consequently in the whole edifice of human life is possible. The necessity for such a change at present remains to be demonstrated in further articles.

E. B.

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## MATERIALISM AND ART.

By GEORGE PLECHANOFF.

(Concluded from last month.)

Another example. Some writers have expressed the thought that in the appearance of man that seems ugly which reminds him of the features of lower animals. This is right in applying it to civilised people, though even here are many exceptions: a lion's head to none of us seems ugly. Nevertheless, despite such exceptions, we can assert that civilised man, conscious that he is an incomparably higher being in comparison with the creatures of the forest, is afraid to resemble them and even tries to exaggerate his *unlikeness*.<sup>14</sup> But in applying this to primitive man we find a large and sweeping contrast. It is known that primitive men often pull out their own incisor teeth, in order to resemble ruminant animals; others file them sharply in order to resemble ferocious animals; some plait their hair so that it resembles the appearance of a horn. Often this tendency to imitate animals is connected with some religious faith of primitive man. But this does not in the least change the matter. Had primitive man looked upon the lower animals as we do, then there would have been no place for animals in religious performances.<sup>15</sup> Primitive man, then, looks upon them differently. Why? Because he *stands on a different step of culture*. That means if in one case a man tries to resemble animals and in another he is trying not to, then the different attitudes depend upon the conditions of his culture, i.e., again upon the social conditions above mentioned. Besides, we can express ourselves much more clearly if we say it depends upon the degree of development of his productive forces, upon his *means of production*. And so as not to be blamed for exaggeration and unilaterality of vision, we shall cite some quotations from the learned German traveller, Von-den-Steinen:

We will only then understand those people—says he about the Brazilian Indians—when we begin to view them as the products of a hunting state of existence. The most important parts of their existence are bound up with the life of animals, and

from this experience their outlook and, correspondingly, their artistic motives have been formed. It is possible to say that their wonderfully rich art has originated entirely in their hunting life.

Chernyshevski wrote in his dissertation, "The Aesthetic Relations of Art to Reality":

In plants we like the freshness of colour and the splendour and richness of form, which reveal a life full of energy and strength. The withering plant is not good, nor is a plant with little life juice good.

Chernyshevski's dissertation is extremely interesting and singular in setting oppositions to questions of aesthetics according to the general principles of Feuerbach's materialism. But history has always been a weak place for this kind of materialism, as is well seen from the above-quoted lines. "We like plants." But who are the "we"? The tastes of people are extremely changeable, as Chernyshevski many times indicated in his book. It is known that primitive tribes—such as Bushmen and Australians—never ornament themselves with flowers, though they live in a country redolent with their presence. It is said that Tasmen were an exception, but it is impossible to verify the truth of this: the Tasmen have all died. At any rate it is quite well known that in the ornaments of primitive hunting people who had taken their motives from animals, plants are entirely absent. Contemporary science can explain this in no other way than upon the plane of productive forces. "Motives of ornaments, taken by hunting tribes from nature, consist exclusively of animal and human form," says Ernest Grosse. They choose only phenomena which have for them a practical interest. The picking of plants, which, of course, to the primitive hunter is an occupation of a lower kind, is relegated to the woman and he himself takes no interest in it whatsoever. This explains why in the art of ornamentation no sign of vegetative motive is richly developed among any civilised people. In reality the passing over from animal ornaments to vegetative, presents a symbol of great progress in the history of culture: "the transition from the hunting state to the agricultural."<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> The Beginning of Art. (P. 149.)

<sup>14</sup> Lotze. Geschichte der Aesthetiken Munchen, 1868. (S. 568.)

<sup>15</sup> Compare J. O. Frazer. "Totemism," 1898. (P. 39), and Schweinfurt. "In the Heart of Africa." (P. 381.)



Primitive art so clearly reflects in itself the conditions of productive forces, that now in doubtful moments the state of those forces is judged by art. Thus the Bushmen very willingly and with comparative ease draw people and animals. In the places inhabited by them some grottoes represent very picturesque galleries. But they never draw plants. In only one known exception of the rule: in representing a hiding huntsman in a bush, the crude drawing of the bush shows how unusual this subject was for the primitive painter. On this ground some ethnologists conclude that even if the Bushmen ever had a culture of a higher standard than now, which talking in general is impossible, then they most certainly have never known *agriculture*.

If all this is correct, then we can formulate the conclusion made by us above from the words of Darwin: the psychological nature of the primitive huntsman creates his æsthetic tastes and conceptions, and the state of productive forces, his hunting state, determines that only these and no other tastes and conceptions are formed. This conclusion, throwing a bright light upon the art of hunting tribes, is also another argument for the validity of the materialist conception of history.

Among civilised people the technique of production more rarely shows direct influence upon art. This fact, to the superficial observer a contradiction to the materialist conception of history, in reality, when considered in the profound manner of a sociologist, gives it brilliant support.

*Translated for "Modern Quarterly" by Bessie Peretz.*

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### THE "DAILY HERALD"—AND TRUTH.

The "Daily Herald" of August 30th last contained an editorial in reply to a letter from a railwayman, which is published on the same date under the heading, "Tell us the Truth." Here is the letter, with certain irrelevancies deleted:—

... I know that the miners' cause is a just one and wants fighting for, but for goodness' sake, why are we kept in the dark about the calling off of the General Strike? We railwaymen are looked down upon as Scabs by a large majority of miners. I was at a large meeting at Dewsbury last Sunday, and the speakers were frequently interrupted by the miners calling Mr. Thomas and Mr. Bromley ———, and blaming them for the extension of the present lock-out. Now, in my opinion, the leaders are keeping something back from the workers, and the "Daily Herald" being the workers' paper, why cannot you let us know what is behind it all? ... The railwaymen are blamed for handling coal. Now how can we help it? ... Cannot we be informed as to the whole of the facts concerning the calling off of the General Strike, and the true reason for calling it off?

Now let us appraise the "points" contained in the railwayman's letter; they may be summarised as follows:—

(1) He feels acutely the invidious position into which he and his fellow workers have been forced by the abrupt termination of the strike; (2) He considers the reasons already advanced for calling off the strike to be spurious ones; (3) He suspects that the leaders in whom he has reposed his trust are "keeping something back"; and (4) he appeals to the "workers' paper" to inform himself and his fellow-workers of "the whole of the facts concerning the calling-off of the 'General' strike, and the true reason for calling it off."

Doubtless to the surprise of the railwayman, and in the face of all precedent, the "Herald" actually deigns to "deal with" the letter in a leading article, which is headed "Nothing but the Truth." Letters of criticism from the Socialist Party or Manifestoes from the Miners' Federation will, of course, continue to receive the attention of the waste-paper basket, but as we can very well believe, the letter in question is "typical of many that have reached us," and hence the leading article.

"Nothing but the Truth." Here then, we shall find the long-looked-for facts, honestly stated, free from omissions and interpolations! Now we shall learn why thousands of workers of all callings were aband-

oned by their "leaders," and the compensating advantages to the workers in leaving the million miners to struggle and starve alone! We shall find no attempts to divert attention from the sole point at issue! No mis-statements; no evasions; no adroit twisting and equivocation! Clear, blunt, and candid exposition of the facts! Here, at last, we will find the truth and nothing but the truth, shall we not? WE SHALL NOT!

In the opening paragraph of the article, the "Herald" indicates its dislike for methods of abuse:—

At the Minority Movement Conference on Saturday, a great deal was said about the calling off of the General Strike, and the "traitorous" conduct of Trade Union leaders. This is the stock-in-trade of Communists. As we know from published documents, abuse and detraction of those who hold official positions in the Labour Movement have been commanded from Moscow as a means of breaking that movement up.

Here we find once again the "Communists" (so soon, too, after the advocacy by the "Herald" of the "United Front"! ) playing the part of a bogey, a part which has been assigned in succession "to Chartists, Atheists, Radicals, Fenians, and Anarchists." The word Moscow, it would appear, has now become the "stock-in-trade" of political charlatans, and to possess a potency only equalled by the "mystic" word "Abracadabra," which was so essential to the mediæval "sorcerers" who preyed upon the credulous aristocracy. The paragraph is obviously intended to divert attention from the weakness of the case put forward.

If the object of the passage quoted is not to distract attention from a weak case, the only other inference we are able to draw is that a "Communist" must never be believed because he is a "Communist," and not because he can be proved to be in the wrong.

The article continues:—

Unfortunately, such tactics, transparent and discreditable as they are, have an effect upon simple minds. Anything that is constantly repeated gets a lodging in numberless minds. ... Our comrade wants to know what is the dark and gruesome mystery surrounding the General Council's action. Why don't the "Daily Herald," he asks pathetically, tell its readers the truth?

In the excerpt below, which follows immediately after the last paragraph quoted, the "Herald" comes tardily to the point at issue:—

The "Daily Herald" has done that all through. The truth is simple. No mystery! Nothing gruesome or sinister!

The General Council ended the Strike because they believed that the Samuel Memorandum offered the best chance of settling the coal dispute which the miners were likely to get; and events are now proving that the Council were right. (Their italics.)

What these "events" are the "Herald" does not enlighten us, and our imagination is unequal to the task of conjuring up what is meant. Perhaps the passing of the Eight Hours Act or the repudiation of the Samuel Memorandum by the Government are the "events" alluded to? Or is the Government's backing of the coalowners in their desire for district settlements the culminating proof of the rightness of the action taken by the General Council? We would like so much to be informed of these "events" which prove that the miners are in a better position through the withdrawal of the backing of the other unions. But perhaps the transcendental sagacity of the General Council is beyond the ken of ordinary minds! We note that the General Council ended the strike because they "believed" the Samuel Memorandum "offered," etc. Blessed are they that believe! Verily the General Council must have mistaken this Samuel for his biblical namesake, whom we are told was "called of God," for he appears to have been a god-send to the Council in their anxiety to find a pretext for ending the strike. Indeed, despite the fact that neither the Government nor the coalowners had accepted the Samuel Memorandum (and both have since repudiated it) and also in spite of Samuel's own declaration that he was acting entirely on his own initiative and without authority from the Government, the "Herald" would have its readers to infer (if we take the statements in this article in conjunction with others previously made by the General Council) that the General Council "believed" that the Samuel Memorandum "offered" the best chance to honour their repeated promises.

to stand firmly and unitedly against any attempt to degrade further the standards of life in the coal-fields. (General Council Industrial Committee, Feb. 26.)

On April 14th, the T.U.C. Negotiating Committee re-affirmed their declaration of February 26th:—

This Committee reiterates its previous declaration to render the miners the fullest support in resisting the degradation of the standard of life, and to obtain an equitable settlement of the case with regard to wages, hours, and national agreements.



And again on May 1st, the "Daily Herald" informs us:—

A firm declaration was presented to the Premier by a Joint Sub-Committee reiterating the original declaration that there must be no reduction of wages, no lengthening of hours, and insisting on a National Agreement with a national minimum percentage.

Further, in the "British Worker" of May 11th, Mr. A. Pugh declares that:—

From the moment the mineowners issued lock-out notices to their workpeople the question at issue, so far as the General Council was concerned, was the withdrawal of those notices as a condition preliminary to the conduct of negotiations. From that we have never receded.

Such firmness and unity! Such eagerness to "believe" in the good faith of capitalist emissaries—such reluctance to vindicate their own! The "Herald" says "the truth is simple," but from our experience of its component parts we are unable to classify the General Council with the truth in relation to simplicity.

In the portion of the article which follows, the "Herald" endorses the validity of its claim to be the Paper with the Punch (especially for the workers!):—

If the miners' representatives had agreed to accept that Memorandum as a basis for negotiations, work could have been resumed three-and-a-half months ago, and no mineworker would have got less than 50s. a week. The only men who would have had to sacrifice anything would have been those who were most highly paid. This, as Mr. Bromley explained to the locomotive men, seemed a reasonable settlement.

O Truth, how many falsehoods are broadcast in thy name! In our September issue, we published particulars from pay-rickets, promiscuously selected, of a South Wales coal-hewer, and the amounts received weekly demonstrate clearly that even before the lock-out the highest paid grade of miner was not guaranteed a wage even approximating to 50s. a week. Mr. A. J. Cook, the Miners' Secretary, in the course of a cutting reply to the same leading article we are analysing, also riddles the 50s. myth:—

All we were ever offered was that wages should not be reduced to less than 7s. 6d. a day, and all wages below that were still to remain the same. No weekly guarantee has ever been given at all. ("Daily Herald," August 31.)

For reasons easily comprehended, the "Herald" has kept a wise silence with regard to criticism of its erroneous statement. In the passage "work could have been resumed three-and-a-half months ago," the "Herald" unwittingly discloses that the anxiety of the General Council was not

so much to secure the withdrawal of the lock-out notices (one of the declared objects of the strike) as to induce or coerce the miners to accept a compromise which would further reduce their appalling standard of existence. Additional confirmation of the "firmness," and "determination" of the General Council to fulfil their pledges to the miners may be noted in the remarks of their Parliamentary spokesman and Privy Councillor Mr. J. H. Thomas, who appealed to capitalist M.P.'s "to avert what I believe to be the greatest calamity for this country." (Hansard, May 3rd.) If an early resumption of work by the miners was the sole desire of the General Council, we are at a loss to understand how the continuance of support from the unions involved in the strike could have prolonged the miners' struggle more than it has been by leaving them in isolation. But the "Herald" has a logic of its own! We might also inform the "Herald" that the miners could have resumed work more than three-and-a-half months ago, nay, they need not have been locked out at all, had they agreed to any terms of employment that might be offered by the mine-owners! After all, it is not the miners who determine when and how they shall work, and the "Herald" seems to overlook the fact that such trivial matters are the prerogative of the employing class, who will only relinquish those rights when they are wrested from them by a class-conscious working-class, politically organised to achieve emancipation.

The final quotation from the article follows on directly from the previous extract. When it (the "offer") was finally rejected by the Miners' representatives, the General Council felt that it would be "futile" to ask the Unions to continue their sacrifice for another day. . . . That is the reason why the Strike was called off. There is no other. The truth is plain to everyone who looks for it. We have restated it here in response to our railway comrade's appeal, and because it is necessary to point out once more that the Minority Movement's attack is not honest criticism offered in the interest of the Labour Movement, but deliberate venom intended to help on the destruction of that Movement, and the substitution of Communism for it.

So we see now that when the offer that was not made was rejected by the miners, the General Council felt (not thought) that it would be futile to ask the unions to continue their "sacrifice" for another day. They therefore most benevolently decided upon the sacrifice of thousands of members of the constituent unions, and complacently provided the conditions for a future mas-

sacre of the remainder when the deserted miners are finally pulverised. The further reference to the Minority Movement does not assist the case advanced by the "Herald." As we have persistently stated it is not possible for the Minority Movement or any other freakish body to introduce Communism merely by changing the leadership of the General Council.

We have dealt with this leading article of the "Daily Herald" at some length only as a specimen of the fustian that is passed off by that journal as being: "From the workers' point of view." As a medium for disseminating news, the "Herald" is behind its Capitalist competitors; as an exponent of Socialist ideas, it is worthless and of more value to the Capitalists in bemusing and mis-teaching the workers than many other journals which do not claim to speak wholly on behalf of the working-class. Until a larger number of the workers understand and desire Socialism, a daily paper devoted to the propaganda of Socialist principles remains a project for the future. In the meantime, the SOCIALIST STANDARD will continue to advance the object of the Socialist Party of Great Britain, which seeks to organise all workers who desire to replace the present system of capitalism by a system based upon the possession and administration by the whole community of the means necessary to produce and apportion wealth to the full needs of all. W. J.

## TWO QUESTIONS ABOUT VALUE.

We have been asked to answer two questions relating to value.

The first question is: "Has land a value?"

The problem is easily solved when once the nature of value is grasped. Broadly speaking, value is embodied human labour-power under particular conditions; that is, human labour-power, or human energy, expended in the production of useful articles for sale. Whether such labour-power is expended at the beginning of the process of production, or at the end, makes no difference to the point in question. That which has not had any human labour-power expended upon it, cannot, under any conditions, have value.

Land, in the sense of virgin soil, natural meadows, ore-bearing soil, or the like, has no value whatever. Land that has been prepared for a productive process, that is, land that has been ploughed, manured, or

otherwise worked upon for a productive purpose has, under the given conditions, a value, and this value is preserved in the product wheat, oats, corn, or whatever else the product may be.

The second question is: "Do wage-workers in the distributive processes produce value?"

Here, again, the question admits of an affirmative and a negative answer, according to what is meant by the "distributive processes."

If by the "distributive processes" the questioner means the transport of an article from its source of production to a spot where consumption requires it, the wage-workers in the transportation industries add value in such distribution. If, however, "distributive processes" means merely the transport of articles to a place where it will be more profitable to the capitalist to dispose of them, then value may not be added by the wage-workers in question.

Perhaps a little enlargement upon the question may make the matter clearer.

An article has no usefulness except in its consumption, and in order that it may be consumed, it may have to be transported. For instance, wheat gathered and sacked in the centre of America has no usefulness to hungry people in London until it has been transported there. Assuming there is no other wheat available nearer than the centre of America, then the labour expended in transporting it to London adds value to the wheat. In other words, necessary labour adds value to products, whether in the actual productive process or in transportation.

It is easy to see that the wheat must be collected and transported to the particular spot in which it is housed, an extension of this process is the transportation to the consumer—providing, of course, the above conditions as to its social necessity are observed. In these circumstances the transportation is an extension of the productive process. GILMAC.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. GREGOR (S. Wales):—

Herbert Spencers declaration that Socialism was inevitable, was made in a letter to M. G. Devenay, of Paris, a few weeks before Spencers' death. We will try and give you chapter and verse for this later.

J. CAMERON (Glasgow):—

Your question: Are Socialists Atheists? is fully answered in our pamphlet "Socialism and Religion," price 2d.



## OFFICIAL NOTICE.

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

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1926

## SOCIALISM v. THE LABOUR PARTY.

It is equally inexplicable that Mr. Keynes should suppose that the British Labour Party . . . includes (or has in its quarter of a century of existence, ever included) anything, either in politics or in economics, that can honestly be called Marxian Socialism. (Sidney Webb, "Economic Journal," September, 1926.)

If a Parliamentary Labour Party is not to be trusted to handle Parliament and to advance Socialism, for goodness' sake do not elect it to begin with. (J. R. MacDonald, "Daily Herald," October 9.)

The second of the two quotations at the head of this column was addressed by Mr. MacDonald to certain sections of the Labour Party which sought to induce the Party Conference to pass resolutions which would have had the effect of tying the hands of the party's parliamentary leaders. Mr. MacDonald candidly denounced some of these resolutions as "political jerrybuilding of a high order" (for instance, the minimum wage and family allowance proposals of the I.L.P.), but whereas we accept the logic of Mr. MacDonald's challenge, his various critics inside the Labour Party fear to do so. We frankly do not believe that the Labour Party can be trusted to advance Socialism, and honesty to ourselves and to the view we hold, compels us to oppose the policy of helping to "elect it to begin with."

This is not because of personal antipathy towards Mr. MacDonald or a belief that

he and his colleagues are less trustworthy than other people. For certain purposes the Labour Party may be an efficient instrument, but such a party with such a programme does not and cannot advance Socialism. In order that our position may be made plain, let us apply a test which was applied by Mr. H. N. Brailsford (originator of the proposals described by Mr. MacDonald as jerry-building) in the "New Leader," of which he has just ceased to be the Editor.

That test is the recognition of the class struggle. Is the Labour Party based on a recognition of the existence of such a struggle in the capitalist system? Mr. Brailsford says that it is, and consequently that it is a Socialist Party. ("New Leader," October 15th.)

The class struggle is defined by Mr. Brailsford in these words:—

"The broad distinction is between those who live upon rent, profit or interest, and those who live by rendering service useful to the community."

The aim of the Socialist is to replace a society divided into property-owners and non-property-owners, by a system of society in which the *only* claim to the enjoyment of wealth produced, will be the rendering of service by all who are fit to do so. This involves the suppression of all incomes derived from the ownership of property; but does the Labour Party propose that suppression? If not, then Mr. Brailsford is wrong. If not, the Labour Party is not a Socialist Party, and cannot be trusted to advance Socialism.

At its annual conference, the Labour Party made many decisions which plainly disgusted its so-called left wing (or wings). It is, however, not necessary to criticise these decisions separately. They all arise because of the deliberate omission from the Labour Party's programme of a recognition of the class struggle. The capitalist class does, at present, own and control the means of producing wealth, and will not, without compulsion, yield its legal right to live by the ownership of property. Rather than face this fact, rather than admit that the class struggle exists and can be abolished from society only by the victory of the working-class majority, the Labour Party proclaims its belief in the possibility of achieving Socialism without destroying the property rights of the capitalist class. It believes that it has found a solution to the ancient problem of making omelettes without break-

ing eggs. It will have "Socialism" without "confiscation."

Mr. MacDonald, discussing the question of land-ownership (reported in "Daily Herald," October 14th) defined his position thus:—

"If he could not get a thing done without compensation, and could get it done with compensation . . . he would do it. No moral issue was involved; it was simply a business proposition."

This was greeted with applause, and no one troubled to ask whether the "thing done" would be Socialism. All of the Labour Party's nationalisation proposals involve the payment of compensation in the shape of interest-bearing bonds to the former owners. Now, apart from the futility of trying to introduce Socialism piecemeal, industry by industry, what will be the position when the Labour Party has finished nationalising all the essential services? The capitalist class will still be property-owners—their property being Government Bonds instead of company shares, etc. They will still live by owning, and without rendering service. To return to Mr. Brailsford's words, instead of *extinguishing* "Rent, profit and interest," the Labour Party will at immense trouble have completed the great transformation of turning "Rent and profit" into "Interest."

The working-class will still be engaged in producing wealth for the benefit of the capitalist class. Socialism will not be in existence, and no important working-class problem will have been solved.

The alternative advocated by us, is to propagate Socialism and organise the working-class in a Socialist Party on a clear-cut Socialist programme. This does not mean, as Mr. Bowen suggested, "Bloody revolution." ("Herald," October 14th). The working-class are the great majority. When they become Socialist they will endeavour to obtain possession of the machinery of Government in the usual "constitutional" way. The Socialist Party not having been guilty, as was the Labour Party, of helping to carry on the recent "bloody war," is less likely than that Party to adopt irresponsible courses leading to bloodshed and disorder.

## STOCKPORT.

Those interested in forming a branch of the Party in Stockport are invited to communicate with THE GENERAL SECRETARY, 17, MOUNT PLEASANT, LONDON, W.C.1.

## SO THIS IS SOCIALISM!

No! gentle reader! This is *not* the latest revue or cinema film; but merely the exclamation wrung from the writer by the perusal of a six-page leaflet by C. Roden Buxton (published by the I.L.P.) which professes to answer the question, "What is Socialism?"

Even in the space of six pages, one would anticipate a clear and definite answer to this question; but any reader of this pamphlet could be pardoned for rising with a sense of confusion on the points at issue.

After referring to various evils (chief of which he appears to regard as the power of trusts to keep up prices) the author says, "Why do these evils exist?" and answers "Because the means of production are owned and controlled by a few people—a minority of the nation." He then explains that the majority are at the mercy of this minority and forfeit the greater portion of the fruits of their labour to them as a consequence. "With modern machinery and organisation, labour can produce far more than it receives for its own maintenance." So far so good! Apart from a slight looseness in the use of the term "labour," nothing could be clearer. But then we are told what "Socialism" is!

"Ownership and control ought to be in the hands of all . . . . It could be exercised in different ways, sometimes by the Central Government, sometimes by the town or other councils, sometimes by some independent body acting on behalf of the public. The *workers* would always have a voice in running their industry . . . . The *consumers* would also be represented on the controlling bodies."

So that the intelligent reader, endeavouring to get a clear idea of Socialism, gathers the impression that, although all will own and control, they will still be divided into workers (i.e., producers) and consumers!

Just how the consumer will escape the necessity of working we are not told directly though, by reading on between the lines, we may gain an inkling.

"Everybody," we are next informed, "thinks that *some* things should be owned and controlled by the public. . . . Socialists think that a great many *more* things should be so taken over—that is all!"

So that the only difference between the I.L.P. and its opponents is evidently one of degree, not of principle. There is, in



other words, no fundamental issue at stake between them.

"Are certain industries ripe for transfer to the 'public' or are they not?" That is all it amounts to!

Who or what is this mysterious public which cannot be identified either with the workers or the present owners of the means of production? We are not told; yet again reading between the lines, we may hazard a guess, with a fair chance of accuracy. But perpend!

"Does this mean the abolition of private property?" No! answers the author. "Furniture, clothes, books, etc., will still remain in private hands."

How the workers will breathe again with relief to think that they will not have the bailiffs coming in to distrain for the rent; that no policeman is likely to apprehend them for public indecency owing to lack of wearing apparel, and that they will be saved the journey to the public library when they want the latest by Ethel Dell.

"So far from abolishing private property, Socialism will make private property possible for the first time for the great mass of the people."

Truly, the author is smart! As though anyone would care how much anyone else had so long as he or she could enjoy all they required. What is the exact sense of the application of the term "private" to articles the use of which is not likely to be challenged? Obviously, none!

The term *private property* can obviously only apply to a state of things where some own and others do not! But this is typical I.L.P. mutton-headedness.

"Moreover," we are told, "small owners must and will be given compensation. Since a sudden or violent change in our social order is not contemplated, the *general* principle of compensation is recognised by the leaders of Labour. A fair equivalent will be given to those whose property is taken over."

Here we have the gist of the matter. Now we understand the future distinction between producers and consumers. We now know who the public are!

It is clear that the workers possess no means wherewith to compensate anyone. Only the capitalists themselves have the power to give each other fair equivalents for property taken over. "Socialism," therefore, according to the author and the I.L.P., of which he is the spokesman, is

nothing more than a book-keeping transaction, like the Capital Levy!

Receiving interest on Government bonds instead of on company shares, the capitalist "public" will be able to go on consuming in comfort the wealth so obligingly produced by those lower orders, the workers.

There will be no sudden or violent change; oh! dear no! What is more, the interests of that important and respectable body of citizens, the backbone of the nation (I mean, of course, the *small* owners) will be adequately safeguarded.

That, we are told, is "necessary in order to satisfy the sense of justice of the average man." Left to the normal course of capitalist evolution, the small owner is doomed to extinction.

The "Socialism" of the I.L.P. has been specially designed to preserve his existence. No wonder the I.L.P. is religious. "Rescue the perishing!" is a fitting war-cry for such an organisation.

After this, the reader will not be surprised to learn that *British* "Socialism," which, above all, is *not* revolutionary, has obtained strong support from leading Christian Ministers. The abolition of competition among the capitalist class—in other words, capitalist solidarity—what could be more touching, more consistent with the mawkish sentiment which characterises the Liberal, Evangelical, "middle-class" followers of the Nazarene.

Significantly enough, the author concludes with a word to "our Liberal friends."

"Here," he says, "is a quotation which, in my opinion, deserves their most careful consideration. 'Last century it was the Liberals who advocated the adoption by the community of very important services which did not fare well in private hands—postal service, educational service, water service, road-way service, and the like. The new Socialists wish to make further application of the principle.'" (Mr. W. S. Anderton, a Liberal, writing in the "Manchester Guardian.")

Need we say more to justify our attitude of opposition to the I.L.P.? Can it fairly and reasonably be described as anything else but a gang of political job-hunters out to catch votes by truckling to traditional prejudice, outworn superstitions, and, above all, petty capitalist interests?

Fellow-workers, we charge you twice as much as the I.L.P. for our answer to the question dealt with; but we give you forty-

eight pages of information concerning the position of *your* class. We are not concerned with the economic salvation of the shopkeeper and other minor parasites. It is the emancipation of the body of the host, i.e., the working-class, which solicits our attention. We invite you also to give it *your's*. E. B.

### SECRET DIPLOMACY.

Much has been written since the war of the iniquity of "secret diplomacy." The Labour Party says that the abolition of secrecy and the introduction of some publicity into the international relations of capitalist states would prevent war. This is an absurd belief. Capitalism is itself the cause of war, and the capitalist class, placed in power by non-Socialist workers, will go to war when necessity demands, without worrying overmuch whether their previous intentions and actions are secret or are known to everyone. Unfortunately, the workers who are politically so imbued with capitalist ideas that they place the capitalist class in power, are also unable to see the fallacy of the argument that war must, on occasion be supported by them in order to defend "their" country. The workers know and accept war and preparations for war. The Labour Party in war-time and peace time, in office and out, votes regularly each year for the maintenance of the armed forces of the capitalist state, and openly speaks of the need for defending the "country's interests" which are the cause of and the excuse for war. There is, therefore, no reason for believing that the Labour Party intends to depart from ordinary capitalist practice. In any future war, as in the past, the Labour Party will not betray the interests of the British capitalist class.

We find, moreover, that the Labour Party's belief in the merits of publicity is as shadowy as its opposition to war. Neither the leaders nor the rank-and-file really believe that the workers are capable of managing their own affairs. They still are as firmly convinced as the older parties of the need for "experts" to settle so-called delicate questions behind closed doors. It is, therefore, not exceptional or surprising that this attitude should be carried over into the realm of diplomacy.

The Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party have a "Joint International Department." A "Sub-Committee on Foreign Services," presented in February,

1925, a "Private and Confidential" Memorandum (No. 333 B.), dealing with "The Foreign Office and Labour Governments." It deals not with foreign policy, but with practical procedure, and contains the following interesting remarks on a definite programme which was being drawn up to govern the relations between the Foreign Office and any future Labour Government.

"It was further agreed at a meeting on February 12th, that this programme should be divided into two—the *one strictly private programme, to be adopted by the Executive and applied by the Labour Foreign Secretary on taking office; the other the public proposals that should be made part of the general party programme by discussion and adoption at party conferences. This should be given a popular appeal and as much publicity as possible.*" (Italics ours.)

Now the interesting point is not the proposals themselves, but the manner of selecting them. The members of the party are not to be consulted. They are to popularise the public proposals, seek votes for them, and are kept in ignorance of the private programme for which only the Executive are responsible. We need not seek for motives. It is sufficient to recognise that the men who do this are not themselves convinced of the necessity for democracy, and the party whose structure and membership permit such procedure is not a democratic organisation. Can anyone doubt that the same men apply the same methods to the rest of the nebulous and forever shifting programme of the Labour Party? J.

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## ARE MARX'S TEACHINGS SOUND?

Nararkad, the King of the Cape York blacks, has had his eyes opened. Mr. Jack McLaren, the Australian author, conveyed a message from him to King George recently and received a reply stating how interested King George was in his message. Mr. McLaren, who has lived with the dusky monarch and his naked subjects for some years, states that until a short time ago King Nararkad was under the impression he was the only king in the world, and was greatly surprised to learn of the existence of others. Which is quite understandable. So long as the world ended where he thought it did King Nararkad undoubtedly was the only king in the world. A case can be made out for anything by leaving out enough objections. Which brings us quite naturally to Mr. Ellis Barker.

He is a member of what is known as the Foam School. He cannot mention the word Socialist without foaming at the mouth. There are a number of them writing in the stunt Press, and their method is monotonously similar. A few trite statements spat out with venom and vindictiveness, together with some airy sweeping assertions and tiny isolated scraps of alleged evidence. For instance, Mr. Ellis Barker, having selected that organ of light and leading, the *Daily Mail*, as his vehicle, proposed in their issue of August 6th to show "How Capitalism has Raised the Worker." First sentence:—

"Socialism is based on mendacity."

Next sentence:—

"Karl Marx set down as a 'law' such rubbish as that under the 'Iron Law of Wages,' wages always tend to sink to the lowest level of mere animal subsistence, and that, owing to the 'Law of Increasing Misery,' the capitalists were bound to become ever richer and the workers ever poorer."

Notice the style! Words like "mendacity" and "rubbish" do solitary duty as arguments. "Karl Marx set down," we are told, but we are not told where he set down. Just by way of contrast—and correction—this is what Karl Marx actually did say on wages (Value, price and profit): "The general tendency of capitalist production is not to raise, but to sink, the average standard of wages."

That carefully-worded statement will be recognised as true. You will notice nothing about "mere animal subsistence" in it.

As a matter of fact, in the same little work Karl Marx gave reasons why the reduction of wages to mere animal subsistence was an improbability. He showed also how wages could be actually raised and yet leave the workers worse off.

Now let us take a cursory glance at Great Britain at the moment when it is being told how Capitalism has raised the worker. There are a million and a half workers registered as unemployed. A million and a half! Think of it! Over a million miners are being remorselessly smashed into accepting a wage which may not represent "mere animal subsistence," but is indistinguishable from it. Some 45,000 railwaymen and 80,000 transport workers are still stranded where their leaders led them, whilst 300,000 of them are only partially employed. The Lancashire cotton mills are closed two weeks in three, affecting goodness knows how many operatives and dependants. Mere animal subsistence perhaps is less than one week's wages in three, but how much less? About a million agricultural workers endeavour to support life on a wage under two pounds per week. And so we could go on. Generally speaking, with all these millions statistically accounted for as either unemployed, under-employed or poorly paid, one would not exaggerate by describing the condition of the working class as miserable. With the statistical abstract before him, Mr. Barker thinks otherwise. The figures that apparently appeal more to his fertile fancy are those relating to imported pork, beef, bacon and ham. He finds these imports have nearly doubled in the 14 years, 1910-24. Imported cheese, butter, eggs and fish also show millions of hundred-weights increases, and he infers this implies increasing opulence of the working-class. We need not insist that no mention is made of any "home-grown" statistics, or of any increase in the population. We would not accuse Mr. Barker of being an economist. He is far too acute for that. His method is the more convincing one of personal observation. He says:—

"Now the British masses are far better fed and better dressed than they were before the war, and they spend vastly more on amusements of every kind."

And, yet, as he scornfully says:—

"Spouters at street corners still talk about the ever-increasing misery of the wage-slaves, addressing well-dressed crowds of male workers smoking cigarettes, and

women workers wearing silk blouses and silk stockings."

Is not this the right note? What is the use of shouting: "Workers of the world, unite," to males smoking cigarettes? Or of volleying forth: "You have nothing to lose but your chains," to women workers in silk blouses? Or, finally, of tempestuously roaring: "You have a world to win," to girls in silk stockings? Of course, it's ridiculous. This increasing opulence on the part of the workers is our greatest difficulty. It has even invaded our own ranks. Members of the Socialist Party have been detected furtively drawing at a cigarette, and many of our lady members are suspected of concealing their nether limbs in silk stockings. It has not yet been deemed necessary to definitely charge these—you cannot call them crimes—discrepancies between democratic profession and plutocratic performance, against our members, but doubtless, now it is seen how damaging they can be to the cause of Socialism, voluntary sacrifice will willingly be made.

Mr. Ellis Barker sees in cigarettes and silk stockings evidence of how Capitalism has raised the worker. Assuming he is serious, perhaps he is seeing what he wants to see. You can make almost any case you like by presenting facts in a certain way.

For instance, Mr. Plunkett Greene the other night, in his wireless lecture, said the Jew's harp was the one instrument he could play better than Kreisler. So if you judge by the increased consumption of imported pork, bacon and cheese, or the prevalence of silk stockings and cigarettes, that Capitalism is the best of all possible systems for the worker, we suggest that the average worker will not feel enthusiastically grateful. He will feel there is more to be said on the matter. He will, perhaps, wonder why, in order that he should enjoy the blessings of cigarettes, foreign pork, and silk stockings (for his wife, say), he should have to spend so much of his life in hunting for a master, and when found, why his master should so persistently press for a wage that will render their purchase an extravagance. He will wonder why his attempts to get a wage that will allow him to smoke two packets of cigarettes instead of one, or of eating English beef, instead of embalmed Argentine, are so strenuously resisted by those who bestow the blessings of Capitalism upon him. Is it enough to tell the miserable that their misery was

greater fourteen years ago; to tell the wretched that they are better dressed than they used to be; to tell the slave that his chains are of better metal than formerly? This may be the philosophy of Capitalism, that of comparative misery, but is there much comfort in it? We think that if Mr. Ellis Barker would take the trouble to explain to an audience of miners, or potters, or shipbuilders, or cotton operatives, how much better off we are all getting, he would find the present time most appropriate. Several new brands of cigarettes have recently taken the air, and Woolworths are getting in new supplies of their opulent silk stockings. It is easy to ascribe mendacity to people one does not like, but opacity, or even loquacity, is no better substitute. Try reading, and thinking, in equal proportions.

W. T. H.

## HULL BRANCH.

### Invitation to Readers.

The members of the newly-formed branch in Hull are anxious to get into touch with party sympathisers and all readers of the "S.S." in that city, with a view to making the party's position better known. They therefore extend a cordial invitation to all who are interested in Socialism to attend at the branch meeting-place, advertised on the back page. Friends with a desire for information and opponents with objections to raise are equally assured of an opportunity to ask questions and express their views. The branch holds its meetings every Sunday at 3 p.m., and discussion follows the ordinary business of the branch. Both the ordinary meeting and the discussion are freely open to all who wish to attend.

## KNOWLEDGE.

The following Books can be obtained from Head Office:—

- Anarchism and Socialism.** Plechanoff. 3/6, paper 1/2.
- Civil War in France.** Marx 2/9.
- Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844.** Engels. 5/-
- Critique of Political Economy.** Marx. 6/6.
- 18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon.** Marx. 3/6.
- Evolution of Property.** Lafargue. 3/6, limp 1/6.
- Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.** Engels. 3/6.
- Poverty of Philosophy.** Marx. 6/6.
- Revolution and Counter-Revolution.** Marx. 3/6, limp 1/6.
- Social and Philosophical Studies.** Lafargue 3/6.
- Socialism: Utopian and Scientific.** Engels. 3/6, limp 1/6. Postage extra.



## HAS BRITISH TRADE A FUTURE?

A month or two back Chiozza Money wrote a series of articles for the "Daily Chronicle" on the "World Race for Trade." On May 21st, he describes a visit paid to Sheffield where he inspected Cammell Laird's works. He found that the efficiency of these works was equal to anything he had seen in America, and yet there is any amount of plant idle, in some instances the works were only working at half capacity.

In dealing with this question of idle plant, he makes the following observations:

It all comes to one word—Markets. There are the Dominions and India, but they are markets not reserved to us. Moreover, in 1926, the world is out of joint. We have to wait for better times.

That those better times will come we may rest assured. The world must, sooner or later, need a much greater supply of iron and steel than it now calls for. The efficiency of Sheffield will not always go unrewarded.

Now it is all very well to "rest assured," but it is much better to know a little of the possibilities of the assurance being well-founded.

In a further article on June 7th, he says:

Foreign competition is increasing and will increase. The expanding markets for which we may legitimately hope will demand less of crudely manufactured and more of artistic productions. Intense and growing foreign competition will make it necessary for British exporters to increase their efforts, and for British manufacturers to adopt every good economic device.

He then goes on to urge that trade unions should welcome the adoption of the best-known machinery and improvements in methods of work. He tacks on to this the well-worn recommendation for a friendly co-operation in economic endeavour between employers and workers.

He makes three main points: (1) that a world-wide expansion in trade is coming shortly; (2) that if English manufacturers reduce their costs of production they will get a large share in it; (3) that an increase in trade makes it possible for the workers to claim a larger share of the product.

We will take a few quotations from different sources that have a general bearing on the questions raised.

As Chiozza Money has concerned himself very much with America, the following quotation from the "Christian Science Monitor" is very apt. We quote it at length, as the points raised are so interesting.

Absorption of surplus production presents one of the outstanding difficulties of the American

manufacturer according to Alvin E. Dodd, of the Department of Domestic Distribution, Chamber of Commerce of the United States, speaking at the thirteenth annual convention of the Society of Industrial Engineers here [Philadelphia].

The former necessity of meeting the existing demand has been succeeded by the question of making a demand for the over-supply, he said. Growth in population, he continued, is only about 16 per cent. above that of 1913, and, if we accept 30 per cent. as the increase in facilities for manufacture, a capacity exists seriously in excess of what might be called the normal demand on pre-war rate of production.

The result of this is seen, he declared, in exaggerated forms of competition, extraordinary displays in advertising, extraordinary costs, unusual growth in methods of distribution, and, finally, the latest expedient, instalment selling, which is not appeased by anything less than the payment of next year's income for this year's product.

With the situation of America as stated above, unable to get rid of a large excess of production, and itching to find fresh outlets for her goods, the race for the satisfaction of the possible expanding market is going to be keen.

Let us take another quotation.

Walter T. Layton, Editor of the "Economist," makes a contribution to the discussion in the "Manchester Guardian," of April 20th last, from which we take the following extract:—

In these circumstances are we most likely to find the much-needed expansion of our foreign trade in the markets of Europe or of the Empire? It must be admitted that the prospect of attaining free trade within the Empire or of making it self-sufficient is not very promising. India, which is much the largest of the Imperial markets, is evidently determined to maintain some measure of protection against British manufactures. Canada, whatever may happen in the political field, is destined to come increasingly within the economic sphere of influence of the United States—a significant sign of which is the fact that Canadian enterprise is no longer financed mainly from London, but from New York. Even Australia is determined to foster her iron and steel, textile and other industries and to keep our British goods as fast as she can replace them at home. The ties of Empire are very real and lasting ones, but no one can look at the map of the world and truthfully say that the British Empire is a natural economic unit or that Great Britain can find a complete outlet for her economic activities in the Empire.

According to the above, and the source should be authoritative, the Empire does not hold out much hope to the English manufacturer in the event of a general expansion of trade.

Let us go farther afield. Let us probe into the condition of the Eastern lands of mystery and hope, and see what prospects for the European manufacturer exist there.

Japan has learnt much from the West, and turned her knowledge to good account. The "Osaka Mainichi," June 30th, 1926, has an article on Japan's growth in prosperity from which we take the following information:—

In 1887, eighty-four per cent. of the foreign trade of Japan was handled by foreign merchants. Of the imports, eighty-five per cent. was handled by foreign firms. During 1894-5, the native firms commenced to increase in activity, and by 1900 they handled thirty-five per cent. of the exports and thirty-nine per cent. of the imports. The Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5 was a great impetus for an enormous expansion of the foreign trade of Japan, and the increasing influence of Japanese traders. But the Great War of 1914-18 was the real opportunity of the Japanese merchants.

Taking advantage of the world demand for silk and cotton piece goods, more than 10 Japanese firms went to the extent of establishing their branches in Wall Street and Madison Square, where almost prohibitively high rents were demanded, and conducted their business, paying high cable rates. The activities of the Japanese merchants then alarmed the Americans, who may be generally classified as amateurs in foreign trade.

The Japanese view of the American foreign traders is worth noting. "Amateurs"!!!

Of late years there has been an enormous development in trustification. The slowing down of European manufacture for foreign markets and for ordinary products in the home markets gave Japan her chance. There was an enormous expansion in Japanese manufacture and trade, and a wild scramble among the producers. Small firms grew rapidly and joined with large corporations.

The post-war panic and the following years of depression caught many of the Japanese corporations in the swirl. Some were driven into bankruptcy along with many private firms. Later, when things were on the mend again, the tremendous earthquake gave them a further set-back. Since the earthquake, things have steadily improved, and Japan is turning greedy eyes abroad for an outlet for her surplus population and surplus goods. At the present date the bulk of Japanese foreign trade is handled by

native merchants. The trust companies have greatly developed, and are preparing a stronger attack upon the markets outside of Japan.

The Japanese have learnt other things, besides manufacturing and trading, from the West. They have learnt how to cover commercial aspirations with a halo of sanctity, as witness the following quotation from the Editorial in the paper mentioned above:

We repeat here that the object of overseas expansion of a nation is to open up the natural resources of the undeveloped lands, and to spread the civilisation in uncivilised regions. Any country which contravenes this common principle of humanity should at this opportunity realise the fundamental mistake of shutting the doors of the country to foreigners.

Japan's neighbour, China, could say a lot on the first part of the quotation, while the last part is a knock at Russia, for "In Asia, there is a vast undeveloped territory of fertile soil in Russian Siberia"!!

The harbour facilities of Japan have been greatly improved lately, and the number of ports open to foreign trade increased up to forty-one, of which by far the most important are Yokohama, Kobe and Osaka.

The way the Japanese set about capturing foreign trade is German in its thoroughness. The following quotation will illustrate how they do it:—

The Foreign Office has decided to send Mr. Yakichiro Suma, one of the administrative officials belonging to the Office, to East Africa by either the Asama or the Yakumo of the Japanese Training Squadron, which is to cruise along the East African coast via Turkey, Malta, Marseilles, Barcelona, and Cape of Good Hope, for the first time.

GILMAC.

(To be concluded next month.)

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## BRANCH DIRECTORY.

- BATTERSEA.—Communications to Sec., 2, Hanbury-rd., S.W.11. Branch meets Thursday, 8 p.m. at The Waiting Room, Latchmere Baths, entrance in Burns Road. Discussion last Thursday in month. Open to all.
- BECONTREE.—Branch meets Wednesdays, at 7.30 p.m., at 32, "Greenway," Green Lanes, Chadwell Heath, Essex. Communications to S. Cash, at above address. Public invited.
- BIRMINGHAM.—Communications to E. Jesper, 38, Rollason Road, Erdington. Branch meets A.E.U. Institute, Spiceal-st., every Saturday.
- CENTRAL.—Membership obtained only through the Ex. Committee. Applications to General Sec.
- CLERKENWELL.—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at 17, Mount Pleasant, W.C.1. Discussions first Wednesday in month at 8 p.m.—all invited. Communications to Sec., at above address.
- EAST LONDON.—Communications to A. Jacobs, Sec., 78 Eric-st., Mile-end, E.3. Branch meets first and third Mondays in month at above address.
- EDINBURGH.—Communications to Andrew Porter, 12a, Kings-rd., Portobello.
- GLASGOW.—Communications to Sec., J. Higgins, 816, Rutherglen-rd., Oatlands, Glasgow.
- HACKNEY.—Branch meets Saturdays, 7 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare Street, Hackney. Discussions after Branch Business. Communications to Secretary at above address.
- HANLEY.—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock St., Hanley, Staffs. Open to all.
- HULL.—Branch meetings, Sunday, at 3 p.m., at the Trade and Labour Club (Jarratt Street entrance). Discussion after meeting. All readers in Hull requested to attend. Communications to Sec., G. Vinecrad, 40, Brook Street, Hull.
- ISLINGTON.—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to N. A. Bishop, 39, Poyning-rd., N.19.
- LEYTON.—Communications to A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.
- PADDINGTON.—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at Emanuel Church Hall, Harrow Road, near "The Prince of Wales." Communications to G. Shears, 200, Shirland Road, Paddington, W.9.
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.—Communications to Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- TOOTING.—Sec., A. Yeomans, 15, University-rd., Collier's Wood, S.W.19. Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m.
- TOTTENHAM.—Secretary 22, Dunloe-road, N.15. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.—Communications to S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.
- WATFORD.—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Thursdays at 8.30 p.m. No 1 Room, Labour Club, Clarendon Road.
- WEST HAM.—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.
- WOOD GREEN.—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN.

## OBJECT.

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

## Declaration of Principles.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

## HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.



# THE Socialist Standard

The Official Organ of **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain.

No. 268. Vol. 23.]

LONDON, DECEMBER, 1926.

[MONTHLY, TWOPENCE.]

## WHO BENEFITS BY MASS PRODUCTION?

### PROMINENT EMPLOYERS' IDEAS EXAMINED.

Sir Edward Anson, Director of the Birmingham Guild, writing a Trade Survey in the *Daily News* (17/9/26), says, among other things, of mass production, that it has two obvious advantages: The owner of the business gains if he can keep up his sales, and the consumer benefits because of the resulting reduction in price.

Mr. Frank G. Wollard, Director and General Manager of Morris Motors, Ltd., challenged Sir Edward's views in a contribution on October 1st, where he claimed that the employees also benefit. As there are not consumers apart from capitalists and workers, according to these two gentlemen, mass production would seem to be an inestimable boon to mankind. We shall see on examination, however, that although differing, both are right in one respect, *i.e.*, the owner of the business gains.

Sir Edward's attitude towards mass production is mainly critical. His chief objections are the monotonous character of machine tending and the loss of skilled craftsmanship. He says:

It is the boast of the majority of mass production owners that there is no machine in their shops that an unskilled man cannot work if he has a day to practise on it. This is very useful when it comes to combating unemployment, such as has been so prevalent since the war, when men have been unable to find work at their legitimate trade, but what will be the outcome in the future. . . .

It has been said that half the misery of life is caused by monotony, and what could be more monotonous than spending day after day pulling the same handle or filling the same hopper? It is incredible to me that the human brain can stand such a test of idleness and not become completely atrophied.

The reference to unemployment in the

above is typical of the capitalist viewpoint; they are combating unemployment when one hundred men find work, no matter if they displace one hundred and fifty. The object of mass production, as with every improvement in machinery and methods, is to reduce the amount of labour time required for the production of a given commodity. If it accomplishes this reduction, unemployment will be increased, instead of diminished. Because, as we shall see later, any increase of sales that might follow as a result of lower prices cannot be permanent.

"What could be more monotonous than spending day after day pulling the same handle or filling the same hopper?" questions Sir Edward. Yet that is the lot of millions of men, women and children under capitalism. Their labour intensified and rendered monotonous, with no respite, except for the congenial atmosphere of the labour exchange and the streets, when the factory owners are unable to keep up their sales.

So far as the loss of craftsmanship is concerned, the people who seem most concerned about such a disaster appear to be those who dodge work of any kind. The average worker, whether engaged in making cabinets or filling hoppers, is always eager to quit at the end of his enforced period of labour. It is not craftsmanship or the opportunity to dally with favourite tools that draws men into the factories. It is sheer necessity, their only means of escape from starvation. Moreover, under modern conditions dallying is not permitted. There is no time for pride in workmanship. The slogan is, "Get on or get out."



Under capitalism the conditions of labour are dictated by supervisors who are driven to maintain or increase profits by the fear of losing their jobs. Under Socialism, where the whole people owned the land and means of wealth production, they would arrange their own conditions of labour. They would naturally adopt the shortest, easiest and safest methods to achieve their object, because such a course would give them the maximum amount of leisure. In any case, freedom to exercise craft pride would be possible under Socialism, under capitalism it is not. The worker's business is to work. He must work in such a way as to satisfy the capitalist greed for profits; there is no time for him to find pleasure in it.

Returning to Sir Edward's original claim that those who gain by mass production are the owner and the consumer, and Mr. Frank Woollard's objection because the employee has not been included, the latter says:

In the first place, Sir Edward can see only two benefits from mass production—a financial benefit to the owner of the plant and a lower price to the public. He has forgotten the worker, who has his share in the general prosperity, both as an employee and as a consumer.

Even supposing certain owners are so foolish as to forget the employees' share of their prosperity, *there is at any rate something to be shared*; whereas if we put the clock back 200 years there would be little or nothing over bare subsistence to divide.

The cat is out of the bag! There is something to be shared. There is prosperity; but it is theirs—the owners, or capitalists who are under no obligation to share and can, if they choose, forget. But what is meant by sharing? and why are some owners foolish in not sharing? Every sharing, bonus, or co-partnership scheme that has been introduced up to the present is based on the principle that the workers must first increase production by greater speed and efficiency before they can share. They then obtain as their share a small percentage of what is produced by their increased efforts. In these circumstances the owners who do not share are, as Mr. Woollard states, indeed foolish.

Sir Edward agrees that the owner gains, but adds a proviso, if he can keep up his sales. But every concern is subject to that obligation. That is the capitalist method of converting surplus value into profits. As a capitalist he is supposed to understand that side of the business. That is where the much-boasted directive ability of the owner

is supposed to come in. He controls his own factory and directs the workers he employs. If he misjudges the market, or produces goods that do not sell, according to capitalist standards he is a failure. But his disappearance from the arena makes no difference. There is still an abundance of capital functioning on the industrial field. The world's markets are not starved, though thousands of concerns fail every year. The failures are like water that overflows the banks of a river in flood. The main stream flows on.

So much for the owner, or capitalist, the fact is established that he gains. What of the consumer? Who is he to start with? Mr. Woollard answers the second question:

And all the time, and every time, it must be remembered that the makers, i.e., the workmen, are the same folk as the purchasers. In the bulk the buyers are not different people living on inherited wealth—that is only for the few.

This simplifies matters enormously. Mr. Woollard is evidently not deceived by the confusing use of these terms by politicians and would-be economists, who divide society into capitalists, workers and consumers. For him, as for us, there are, in the main, two classes, capitalists and workers. We have already seen that the workers, as workers, do not gain by mass production. We shall see that they do not gain as consumers.

It is no coincidence that, in the years that have elapsed since the war, mass production and improved means and methods generally, have made enormous strides. While the same period has been characterised by a continuous and steady reduction of wages all round, the masters are organised for this purpose more strongly than they have ever been before. Their chief reason when forcing a reduction is that the cost of living has fallen. With one and a half million workers unemployed and trade unions with little or no fighting funds, resistance is almost useless.

Mass production may reduce prices for the consumer, but the consumer who belongs to the working-class lives by the sale of his energy. The cost of reproducing that energy from day to day having fallen, its price on the labour market falls. He is forced to realise that the commodity character of his labour power cheats him of any share in the rich rewards of mass production. F. F.

## SHOULD WE JOIN THE LABOUR PARTY?

### OUR POSITION VINDICATED.

We have always maintained that the only place for Socialists is inside a Socialist organisation completely independent of all other political parties. This, we say, is the only way of carrying on Socialist propaganda free from compromise and from distracting side issues. Those who differed from us on this point have urged that it was worth while to make a sacrifice of some amount of independence in order to keep inside the Labour Party and carry on propaganda there. But what has been the result of their policy? Never have events shown so plainly as now, how unsound that policy and how poor its fruits.

As a political machine the Labour Party is a success, but its successes are not for Socialism. It has just won some 200 seats in the local council elections, but as is pointed out by a correspondent in the *New Leader* (November 12th), the Labour programme in Cardiff contained "little that could not be supported by any well-meaning Tory. . . . Only one candidate mentioned Socialism in his election address." And as he rightly adds, "these shortcomings are by no means peculiar to Cardiff." The winning of elections on non-Socialist programmes may give power for certain things to those who come into control of the political machinery, but it will give no power for the furtherance of Socialism. So also the enrolment of non-Socialist members will make the Labour Party larger, but it will not make it more favourable to Socialism. One of the recent notable recruits—Commander Kenworthy—has confessed (*Daily Herald*, November 15th) that just before his decision to leave the Liberals he was invited to join and receive the support of the Conservative Party. A man who was in the Liberal Party and is considered fit to receive Conservative support is not a Socialist, whatever he may be. The ex-Liberals who flock in with Kenworthy are no more Socialist than he.

John Beckett, of the I.L.P., a Labour M.P., laments that those who control the Labour Party are rapidly turning the "Labour movement . . . into a carefully controlled pawn in the political game." (*New Leader*, November 12th.) He wants

the I.L.P. to carry on the fight against reaction in the Labour Party, but is then compelled to admit that, "The Left must fight in the I.L.P. almost as hard as in the wider movement."

The present situation, then, is this. The I.L.P. tries to permeate the Labour Party, but in the process has itself reached such a state that the permeators must "fight in the I.L.P. almost as hard" as in the Labour Party. The Labour Party wins elections on non-Socialist programmes, and the permeators are compelled to assist at these elections and suppress their own opinions for the sake of their loyalty.

George Lansbury makes a humiliating confession of his own position inside the Labour Party in explaining why he recalled a promise to support the candidature of Dr. Dunstan in West Birmingham. Dr. Dunstan was a Labour candidate and a Communist, and was replaced by an "official" Labour man in accordance with the Labour Party decision to refuse to endorse or accept to membership all members of the Communist Party. Lansbury writes to Dr. Dunstan (*Lansbury's Labour Weekly*, November 13th): "I still think your position in West Birmingham entitled you to the support of every working-class elector . . . and I am only sorry that circumstances connected with my membership of the Labour Party and the loyalty which such membership involves prevents me carrying out my promise."

Dr. Dunstan is in Lansbury's view "entitled to the support of every working-class elector," but is not going to receive Lansbury's support because of the latter's loyalty to the Labour Party, and while Labour Party discipline prevents the permeators from propagating Socialism, the Labour Party goes on absorbing Liberals at a rate which makes it possible for its leaders to continue to change its programme in an anti-Socialist direction, and make it a "pawn in the political game." All the time the permeators find that their efforts to keep their own organisation straight are hampered by association with non-Socialists. How can a Socialist hope to convince electors that they should support non-Socialist



labour men and programmes, if at the same time he is trying to preach Socialism? One or the other must suffer. In fact the Labour Party grows in size with the help of the I.L.P., but both the Labour Party and its would-be permeators become too much bound up with seeking for votes to have time for Socialist propaganda.

There is, of course, another group believing in permeation—the Communist Party. Their present undignified position is a further justification for our attitude. The Labour Party, not unnaturally, only wants assistance from those who will help it to get into power. It does not want to be hindered by affiliated bodies which propagate policies which have no electoral value, and since the mass of electors are not Socialist, Socialism is thus ruled out. Thus it accepts the I.L.P., which, as Mr. Beckett says, differs little from itself. But if the I.L.P. tried to justify its argument by concentrating on Socialist propaganda, it would be summarily ejected. The Communists have so far not been accommodating enough, and therefore are refused admission.

To preach Socialism inside the Labour Party just as much as to preach it outside means condemning its programme and its methods. If, therefore, the Socialist Party desired entry into the Labour Party, it must consent to give up its work for Socialism and devote at least part of its energies to promoting non-Socialist candidatures which it honestly knows are of no value to the working class. We cannot accept such conditions.

We are Socialists because we believe literally that Socialism is the sole hope of the working class. We are independent because that is the only safeguard against confusion and compromise and the growth of non-Socialist tendencies in our own ranks. H.

#### NEW BRANCHES.

Enquiries concerning the formation of Branches have been received from the following districts. Members and sympathisers willing to co-operate are asked to communicate with Head Office immediately:

**Fulham, Gravesend, Ilford, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Peckham, Portsmouth, Reading, Sheffield, Stockport, Sittingbourne, Woking, Woolwich.**

### THE PRINCIPLES OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY.

#### PART II.

Is Socialism necessary? This question can only be answered by considering the nature of the forces at work in present-day society. In a previous article it was shown that history has been the record of class-struggles based upon the development of the means of production and of various forms of property.

The present-day means of production are capital, the modern form of property; that is to say, they are used by their owners, a small class in society, for the purpose of obtaining profit.

The capitalist, owning a certain sum of money, uses it to purchase machinery and raw material with a view to selling the product at a profit. For this purpose he needs to buy a special commodity, labour-power, which, applied to the raw material and machinery, produces useful articles of a value greater than that of the combined value of the original factors. The value of the labour-power used is determined by the time socially necessary to reproduce it. This applies to all commodities. Labour-power, however, plays the active part in the creation of value, and consequently of surplus value, which is that part of the value created which is kept by the employers. Surplus value is that part of the product left over after paying for labour-power and the cost of raw materials, wear and tear, etc.

Now, how comes it that the capitalist finds this extremely useful commodity, labour-power, to hand? The labourers have no means of living except by the wages they can earn. The land, factories, railways, etc., are owned by the capitalist class. The majority of members of society to-day are propertyless. In order to live, therefore, they must sell the only commodity they possess, their own energy.

The separation of the labouring class from their means of life was a prolonged process in history. The enclosure of common lands, the forcible ejection of the peasantry, the introduction of large-scale workshops, and later on of machine-factories, all played their part in making the workers dependent upon their present-day masters. At the same time, all other classes but these two have vanished from social life. Of the aristocracy

and middle-classes of the mediæval world, nothing is left but their titles and prejudices. The capitalist class preserve both as a means of displaying their power and duping the workers.

To-day, therefore, the social stage is set for the struggle between the last two classes to emerge in the course of social evolution. The patricians and the plebs (of Rome) alike went down before the barbarians of the North of Europe. The feudal nobility were vanquished by the upstart burghers of the towns. Beneath them lay the slaves and serfs, occasionally rebellious but doomed to defeat by the undeveloped state of the economic conditions of their life. The isolation of the peasant groups based upon the backward character of their mode of life prevented them rising to the level of a ruling class.

To-day, however, the means of production unite the workers in vast world-wide organisations. In the effort to cope with the effects of the capitalist system the workers develop a measure of solidarity undreamt of under the systems of former ages. Railways, post, printing press and platform enable ideas to spread with greater rapidity than ever.

The struggle between the capitalists and their wage-slaves over the wealth produced by the latter results in ever-worsening conditions for them. Every improvement in machinery or methods strengthens the owning class by increasing the number of unemployed and the competition for jobs. This competition enables the capitalists to push wages down ever nearer to the physical limit, the bare subsistence level.

Investigators such as Charles Booth and Seebohm Rowntree long ago showed that the wages of roughly one-third of the workers left them with insufficient to maintain normal health and vigour.

Since their works were published the standard of life of the workers generally has been reduced still further. The acceleration in the pace of machine development during the war resulted in an unheard-of level of unemployment, and wholesale cuts in wages which had already failed to rise to the same extent as the cost of living.

After a century of Trade Union effort the workers find themselves grappling with the same problems in an aggravated and chronic form with less success than ever before. All

the victories of the past are rapidly losing their value in face of the modern organisation of capital, and the share of the workers in the product of their labour grows constantly less. The very process by which the workers create a mass of wealth much greater than they are allowed to consume heaps up in the hands of their masters one of the means by which the workers are beaten.

For the workers, therefore, there can be but one hope—a complete change in the ownership of the means of production and in the motive for which industry is carried on. The interests of the capitalist class lead that class to fortify their position by every means in their power. The interests of the workers demand that they shall attack that position.

The very nature of the means of production at the present time renders any form of individual ownership by the producers out of the question. In order to produce wealth to-day each worker must co-operate with his fellows; he cannot act alone. Social effort is the very essence of modern industry. Private ownership is, therefore, out of harmony with the means and methods of production in their present stage of development. Common ownership must take its place. The antiquated legal form must yield to economic progress.

The mature social character of modern industry has rendered poverty unnecessary and a drag upon further development. The capitalist class own and control forces which they cannot fully utilise, forces which flood the markets with goods that the workers cannot buy.

In order to solve their problems the master class can think of two alternatives: either to lower wages still further and thus render still more goods unsaleable, or to introduce more machinery and by intensifying production increase still further the amount of commodities seeking purchasers.

These solutions can only help individual capitalists against their competitors. They cannot help the capitalist class as a whole. They cannot prevent the thinning of the ranks of that class. They can only hasten the concentration in the hands of the few of the total capital and the reduction of the many to bankruptcy. The scramble for profit can have no other result than to prepare industry for its transfer to the workers.



Concentration paves the way for socialisation.

With the abolition of private ownership the profit-seeking motive will cease to operate. This is what our capitalist opponents mean when they say that there will be no incentive under Socialism. They can conceive of no other incentive. The workers, however, will still need food, clothing and shelter, and, having in their hands the necessary means, will go on producing these things in greater abundance than ever. The productive forces, freed from control by competing interests, will be utilised by society as a whole in accordance with a common plan, democratically determined in the interest of all.

If this brief summary has carried with it the reader's conviction, he will agree with the first three clauses of our Declaration. Consideration of the others will form the subject of further articles.

E. B.

#### CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP.

A sympathiser, who is unable to become a member, writes to point out that there may be others like himself who, while prevented from joining the Party, would nevertheless like to make regular contribution of an amount equal to that paid by members. We would, of course, welcome such financial assistance. In stating that the contribution is 3d. per week, we must, however, particularly emphasise that there is no financial barrier whatever attaching to membership of the Socialist Party. Every member who is unable to make this payment is entitled by rule to have it waived.

#### RECEIVED FOR REVIEW.

*The General Strike*: May, 1926.—Trade Councils in Action, by Emile Burns. 2/- Labour Research Dept.

*Red Money*.—A statement of the facts relating to the money raised in Russia during the General Strike and Lock-out in Britain. 6d. Labour Research Dept.

*British Imperialism in Malaya*. 6d. Labour Research Dept.

*Company Unions* (Labour White Paper, No. 25). 1d. Labour Research Dept.

#### NEW PUBLICATIONS FUND.

Contributions to this fund are earnestly invited to assist us with the expense of publishing more literature.

#### Becontree Branch.

#### A LECTURE

on

#### "What is Socialism"

will be given at

Ashton Hall, High Rd., Chadwell Heath,

ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 10th, at 8 p.m.

Questions and Discussion. Admission Free.

#### Battersea Branch.

#### A LECTURE

on

#### "Socialism and the Anti-Parliamentarians"

will be given at

Battersea Town Hall (Lower Hall),

ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5th,

at 7.30 p.m.

Speaker - J. FITZGERALD.

Admission free. Questions and Discussion

#### Free to All.

#### INDOOR LECTURES.

#### A Winter Course of Meetings

#### EVERY SUNDAY,

at 7.30 p.m., at

THE EMILY DAVISON CLUB ROOMS,

144, High Holborn, W.C.

(Near British Museum Station.)

The Lecture will be short, followed by questions and discussion.

Subject: "ASPECTS OF SOCIALISM."

#### HULL BRANCH.

#### A LECTURE

on

#### "The Road to Socialism"

will be given at

METROPOLE HALL, HULL,

On Sunday, 5th December, at 7.30 p.m.

Speaker - A. KOHN.

#### CAPITALISM VICTORIOUS IN CHINA.

In our issue of August, 1925, we set out our view of the situation in China and explained why Socialists cannot share the extravagant hopes raised in certain quarters by the progress of the Kuomintang Party. As in the pioneer capitalist countries, so also in those which have been subject to foreign imperialists, the capitalists are always anxious to obtain the help of the workers in the fight against their own enemies, whether those enemies be feudal proprietors or foreign capitalists. No doubt there was a gain in the grant to Ireland of "self-government." That gain is a gain in clarity. It is no longer possible for the Irish defenders of capitalism to pretend that the poverty and unemployment suffered by the Irish workers are due to "foreign" government. So also in China. It is better that the Chinese workers should be able to realise that they suffer from exploitation just as much whether at the hands of Chinese exploiters or European and Japanese exploiters. The rise of a strong independent capitalist Chinese Republic will enormously hasten the economic and political development of the Eastern workers. But we must at the same time point out that nothing is gained and much is lost by misinterpreting the outcome of these national struggles.

If the Chinese workers are encouraged to see in national independence a solution of their economic problems they will—like the Irish, the Poles and many others—suffer a grievous disappointment. It is the duty of the Socialist to work to destroy the present illusion and thus avoid the future disillusion. Let the Chinese workers organise not as Chinamen alongside their home capitalists, but as workers. They should reject the fallacious argument of foreign political parties which urge them to do otherwise. In England this fallacy is based on an old saying that "The enemies of my enemies are my friends." In truth the capitalist enemies of the British capitalists are *not*, and cannot, be the friends of the workers, British or non-British. If the Chinese capitalists happen to be at loggerheads with the British capitalists, that is no reason why British or Chinese workers should imagine they have a friend in the Chinese employing class.

In the *Sunday Worker* (November 14th)

the position in China with all its pitfalls to the workers is shown in a nutshell:

The native merchant class saw the trade of the country growing under the domination of the foreign financial groups while their own share of the booty grew smaller. The foreign imperialists had to be fought.

Unable to fight the battle alone the native capitalists sought salvation in the Kuomintang. They planned to use the revolt of the Workers and Peasants to drive out the foreign imperialists and to establish a new imperialism of their own.

The right wing of the party has therefore grown to an alarming extent, and unless the Left Wing can retain control the Workers of China and Europe will find that when European imperialism has been smashed a Chinese imperialism will have risen in its stead. This is the real "Yellow Peril."

And not only does the approaching victory of the Kuomintang lead the Chinese capitalists to prepare for the inevitable future clash with their own exploited classes, but it seems likely also that they will follow the path already trodden by their fellow capitalist-nationalists in Ireland and India. In the long run they will find that as capitalists they have lasting and important interests in common with some or other of their late capitalist enemies. The *Sunday Worker* correspondent reports that the British Foreign Office is now in favour of supporting the Kuomintang capitalists, who in turn will no doubt be glad of this outside help in time of trouble at home with the Chinese workers. The real task of the Chinese workers is that of the workers everywhere—to fight against capitalism whatever the national flag under which it hides. The duty of Socialists is to keep this issue always to the fore, not to rouse deadly national hatreds which obscure the class divisions in society and retard the growth of Socialism.

H.

#### PADDINGTON SOCIALIST LECTURES

EVERY SATURDAY, at 8 p.m.

EMANUEL CHURCH HALL,

HARROW ROAD

(Near "Prince of Wales.")

ADMISSION FREE TO ALL.

Questions and Discussion.



**OFFICIAL NOTICE.**

All communications for the Executive Committee, Subscriptions for the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Articles, and Correspondence submitted for insertion therein, should be addressed—The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 17, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1, to whom Money Orders should be made payable.

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office, every Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m.

**TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.**

Twelve Months, post free... 2s. 6d.  
Six Months, post free... 1s. 3d.

**The Socialist Standard,**

DEC.,



1926

## THE 'REVOLUTIONARY' (!) COMMUNISTS.

The capitalist character of the Communist Party programme is again shown by the policy drawn up by the C.P. for the Labour Party Conference at Margate.

In their pamphlet, "The Reds and the Labour Party," the following is a list of "constitutional demands" of the Communist Party.

1. The abolition of the Monarchy and the establishment of a Democratic Republic.
2. The abolition of the House of Lords.
3. The establishment of a single franchise for all purposes, whether Parliamentary or local government, applicable equally to all men and women from 21 years of age.
4. The adoption of a national system of proportional representation.
5. The abolition of all restrictions whatsoever on qualifications for membership of public bodies, and the adoption of the adult franchise as the sole basis.
6. Full political rights for soldiers, sailors and airmen.
7. To secure that all vehicles used for conveyance of voters to the poll shall be registered with the Returning Officer not later than 72 hours before the opening of the polling, and to enact that it shall be the duty of Returning Officers to apportion such registered vehicles equally amongst the candidates, irrespective of Party.
8. The provision of greater facilities for polling places in the outlying and rural areas, and the imposition of penalties for irregularities by Returning Officers in the conduct of elections.

One minute the C.P. ridicules the value of Parliament, and the next minute they demand the usual Liberal reforms of the orthodox Parliamentarian.

Vote-catching and job-hunting are evidently the stock in trade of the C.P.

**AN I.L.P. EVANGELIST.**

An Evangel of Unrest: The Life Story of Bonar Thompson. 1/- From the author, Marble Arch, W.1.

Bonar Thompson tells his life story in his usual style, from the days of unemployment processions in Manchester to his C.O. days during the so-called Great War. He pays tribute to our Party's unswerving attitude during the war, but makes the curious statement that the I.L.P. was as firm as a rock against the war. He avoids the gymnastics of Ramsay MacDonald on the question and the association of the I.L.P. as an integral part of the Labour Party which joined the War Government.

Bonar Thompson does *not* tell us of his joining and leaving the Communist Party, and his reasons for that. He simply says he belongs to the I.L.P. now. What connection the I.L.P. has with Socialism he does *not* say. The prominent "pacifist" users of force in the Labour Government belonging to his I.L.P. he avoids to mention.

He denounces those who harp on "the position" and "economics," to the exclusion of the more emotional life, but he does not argue his case. He leaves it to denunciation. He is very bitter about those who object to paid speakers and paid literature sellers, etc. Here again he does not argue, but becomes vitriolic in denouncing his critics. So there is nothing to answer.

In a letter accompanying the book Bonar Thompson tells us that he has been a consistent reader of the SOCIALIST STANDARD since 1907, but he accounts for his "political ignorance" by his "temperament and intellectual constitution." Parties, however, are the expression of economic interests, not temperaments, and Thompson's excuse for his outlook simply avoids the question of the soundness of the Party's position.

For those who are interested in Bonar Thompson's life the book will be of interest for what it contains, as well as its omissions.

C. R. B.

[Plechanoff's Famous Work now translated.]

## THE MONISTIC CONCEPTION OF HISTORY.

By G. Y. PLECHANOFF.

Materialism is the direct opposite of idealism. Idealism strives to explain all phenomena of nature, all the properties of matter, through one or the other of the properties of the spirit. Materialism does just the opposite. It tries to explain all psychological phenomena through some properties of matter, through the organisation of the human, or living, organism. All those philosophers for whom matter is the prime factor belong to the materialist group, all those that hold spirit as the prime factor are idealists. This is all that can be said about materialism in general, for on its foundations various structures have been erected, materialism of one epoch has an entirely different aspect from that of another epoch.

Materialism and idealism are the two most important tendencies in philosophy. It is true, together with these two, there have always been some kind of dualistic systems that recognised spirit and matter as separate and independent substances. But dualism could never satisfactorily reply to the inevitable question,—how could two substances, separate and independent as they are, influence each other? This is why all the foremost and the deepest thinkers have been inclined to monism, *i.e.*, to explain all phenomena through the help of some *one* fundamental principle. Every profound idealist as well as every profound materialist is a monist. In this there is no difference, for instance, between Berkeley and Holbach. The first was a confirmed idealist, the second was a no less confirmed materialist, but both were monists; both understood the impossibility of dualism.

In the first half of our century<sup>1</sup> idealistic monism reigned; in the second half—in science, with which materialism has since united—materialistic monism, gained the upper hand, though a materialism not always open and frank.

Here we do not need to give a whole history of materialism.<sup>2</sup> It will be enough for us to observe its development beginning from the second half of the last century

(18th) and even in this period, its principal tendencies will suffice for us. We will take up the materialistic views of Holbach, Helvetius and their co-workers.

The materialists of this school conducted a heated polemic against the *official* thinkers of the time, who, professing to follow Descartes, whom they scarcely understood, argued that man has certain innate ideas,—ideas that are independent of experience. Combating this view, the French materialists, only defended the views of J. Locke, who, as early as the end of the 17th century, taught that there are no innate principles. But in explaining Locke's philosophy the materialists have given it a more momentous character, touching on problems which the well-bred English liberal ignored. The French materialists were undaunted sensualists; they looked on all psychic activities of man as *transformation of sensations*. It would be useless here to inquire how far their arguments are good in the light of contemporary science. It is obvious that the French Materialists of that time did not know what every high school boy knows to-day. It is enough to remember only the views of Holbach on physics and chemistry—though he was supreme in the science of his day. The great merit of the French materialists was that they thought deeply, and in correspondence with the science of their time. This is all that we can demand from any thinker. There is, of course, nothing strange in the fact that science has advanced far beyond the views of the French materialist. It is more important to remember that those who fought against the materialists were even then behind the science of the time. It is true the historians of philosophy usually put the views of Kant as antithetical to the views of the materialists. It would certainly be strange to reproach Kant with ignorance. It would, nevertheless, not be hard to show, that both Kant and the materialists stood on the same fundamental principles, but used them in different ways, and, therefore, came to different conclusions. This was in accordance with the different social environment that influenced their respective lives and thoughts. We know that people who be-

1. This was written in 1894. Translator's Note.  
2. A few years later Plechanoff published "A Contribution to the History of Materialism." Translator's Note.



lieve the historians on their bare words, will find this opinion paradoxical. We have no opportunity of proving the truth of this statement here; but we do not refuse proof if our opponents demand it.<sup>3</sup>

It is well known, however, that the French materialists viewed all psychic activity of men, as transformation of sensation (sensations transformées). To view psychic activity from this standpoint means to recognise that all conceptions and feelings of man are results of the *influence of his environment*. This the French materialists recognised. They continually, hotly and categorically, declared that man with his views and feelings is what his environment makes him, his environment being in the first place, *nature*, and the second place, *society*. "L'homme est tout educatione," declares Helvetius. By education he understands the sum total of social environment. This view of man as a product of his environment was the chief theoretical basis of the *new* demands of the French materialists. If man is dependent on his environment, if the environment is responsible for every trait in his character, it is also responsible for his defects. If you would fight against his defects, you must change his environment accordingly, and primarily his *social* environment, because nature creates man as neither good nor bad. Place him in a reasonable social position under such conditions that his self-preservation instincts do not necessarily drive him to fight every other man, among conditions in which the interests of the individual correspond with interests of the whole society—and virtue will triumph. (Vertu) virtue is not something to be made possible through a reasonable reconstruction of social relations. Thanks to the conservatives and reactionaries of the last century (18th), the morality of the French materialists is still thought of as the morality of egoism, while they themselves defined it more correctly when they declared that their morality entirely merges in politics.

The teaching that the spiritual world of man, is the result of his environment often brought the French materialists to results entirely unexpected by them. Thus, for instance, they often declared that the

opinions of man have no influence whatever on his conduct, and, therefore, no matter what ideas society holds it cannot change its fate in the least. We shall later show where they were mistaken. At present let us examine the other side of French materialism.

If the ideas of every man are determined by his environment, then the ideas of the human race must be determined by the evolution of the social environment, by the history of social relations. If we desire to paint a picture of the progress of human reason, and if we do not limit ourselves to the question "how," but also ask "why," we must begin from the history of the environment; from the history of the evolution of social relations. The main point, at least at the beginning, would then be to discover the laws of social evolution. The French materialists approached this problem, but could not solve it, or even put the question correctly.

Whenever they began to speak about historical development of society, they forgot their sensualistic view on man in general, and together with "Enlighteners" of their time, declared that the world (i.e., social relations of men) was ruled by opinions (c'est l'opinion qui gouverne le monde). This is the basic contradiction of the 18th century materialism.

(To be continued.)

Translated by H. Kantorovitch for MODERN QUARTERLY."

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3. Plechanoff has proved this in a series of brilliant polemical essays, against Bernstein, Conrad Schmidt, and other neo-Kantians. "Neue-Zeit," 1898-1899.

## HAS BRITISH TRADE A FUTURE?

(Continued from last month).

Mr. Suma is to study the business conditions in East Africa, whose ports have never been visited by Japanese mercantile ships. The N.Y.K. and the O.S.K. have opened the new East Africa service in April with a view to promoting the business between Japan and East Africa. The Navy has advised the Foreign Office to send an official to East Africa in order to study customs, local circumstances, and economic conditions there aboard one of the warships, which the Navy Office has scheduled for the cruise along East Africa. The Foreign Office has been selecting the official since. The squadron is to leave Japan early next month, and will come back in January next year. ("Osaka Mainichi," 30/5/26.)

The "Bombay Chronicle" of July 23rd, 1926, quotes the "Japan Chronicle" of April 8th, 1926, to the following effect:—

The "Asahi" reports that the scheme of the Foreign Office to further Japan's economic development in Persia and the South Seas is making fair progress. The Supplementary Budget for the fiscal year 1926-27 includes an item relating to investigations into trade development in the South Seas involving Yen 24,299, and another item bearing on similar investigations in Persia and neighbouring countries to Yen 56,204. With regard to the investigation into economic conditions in Persia and neighbouring countries, it was started soon after Mr. Obata, Ambassador to Turkey, arrived at his post some time ago, and, judging from the results of the sample exhibition of Japanese exports which was held at Constantinople, it is hoped that it is not altogether impossible for Japanese goods to be exported to the Balkans, Asia Minor, Persia and Afghanistan, to the amount of Yen 100,000,000 a year. At a conference on investigations with trade development, which is to be held at Constantinople for ten days from the 20th inst., it is expected that recommendations to be submitted to the Foreign Office will be considered and adopted. These recommendations will furnish valuable materials for reference for those Japanese traders who wish to export their goods to those countries. In the meantime the Government is contemplating establishing Consulates where they are required for trade purposes.

As regards trade development in the South Seas, the Foreign Office is to call in Tokyo a conference of Consuls appointed to Calcutta, Batavia, Singapore, Bombay, Sydney, Manila, Hongkong, Haifong, Saigon, Rangoon and Bankok, at which will also be present the officials of the Departments concerned and business men chiefly interested in the South Seas' trade. At this conference matters relating to Japan's economic development in those districts will be thoroughly studied.

At the moment, India is feeling very seriously the effect of Japanese competition, and the Bombay Millowners' Association has submitted a statement to the Muf Board showing how they are hit by the competition of Japan. Extracts from this report are published in the "Bombay Chronicle" for July 20th and 23rd, 1926. The follow-

ing excerpts are taken from the extract:—

Japanese competition was severe, and in certain instances Japanese goods were offered at prices lower than the cost price of similar goods manufactured in India. . . .

. . . . The mill industry is suffering from the unfavourable rate of exchange with Japan and highly organised Japanese competition.

Japan, owing to her larger production of yarn and piece-goods for export has a much better balanced trade than India.

In piece-goods the position is much more unfavourable to India, the value of India's piece-goods export trade to China being only about one-tenth of what it was; Japan's trade has increased forty or fifty-fold.

What strikes one most in considering the growth of Japanese competition is the amazing rapidity with which her imports into this country have gone up. It may be broadly stated that in 1914-15 the total imports of Japanese yarn into India were less than a million pounds, while in 1924-25, i.e., about ten years later, the quantity imported was more than 32 times the figure of 1914-15. Again, in piece-goods, the quantity imported in 1914-15 was about 16 million yards, and in 1925-26 it had risen to nearly 220 million yards.

It is this extraordinary rise every year in Japanese imports which fills with dismay the minds of everybody who has a stake in the cotton mill industry of the country. If the Japanese imports go on increasing at the present rate one hesitates to contemplate the plight in which the cotton mill industry of the country will find itself in about five or six years' time.

It is forgotten that not only is Japan dealing severe blows to Indian manufacturers in Indian markets, but she is making rapid inroads in the export markets. In the words of the Administration Report of the Bombay Presidency for 1923-24, "Since 1917 China has been practically a closed market for Indian piece-goods, owing mainly to the expansion of the indigenous textile industry and to the rigour of Japanese competition."

India has practically lost her export trade in yarn, and since this yarn has necessarily to be utilised in manufacturing cloth, it is of the utmost importance to develop the export trade, but here again Japan with the unfair advantages she is enjoying over India is proving a very formidable rival, for not only has she ousted India from the Chinese market, but is rapidly capturing her foreign markets, e.g., Egypt, East Africa; etc.

There is a pretty kettle of fish for Chiozza Money to stew! The above quotations only deal with one branch of Japan's activities, but it must be remembered that she produces the bulk of the world's silk; that she is conscious of her shortcomings in the coal, iron and steel industries; and is making strenuous efforts to remedy them; that she has a cheap and almost unlimited supply of labour to call upon; and that in the matter of factory legislation, particularly with re-



gard to hours of labour and female and child labour, she lags far behind the other advanced countries.

Japan's neighbour China is in the industrial melting-pot. China is making strides in the way of producing to meet her own needs, and when she too commences to make a serious attack on the world's markets—well, there will need to be some “reductions in the cost of production” to meet the twin eastern commercial menace!

To come down to the position from the worker's point of view, we can see in the struggle for markets a terrific development in machine-production and elimination of human assistance in the production of goods. This would be very acceptable if the workers owned the machines, but as the employers own them, it means the elimination of jobs. Without jobs, no wages; and without wages, no bread—or the workers must decide that it is time they reaped the multitude of advantages accruing to those who own and control the means of production.

GILMAC.

### FORD v. MARX.

Two or three months ago, one of our contributors had occasion to criticise the illusions of the Editor of the “Observer” concerning the respective intellectual merits of the notorious exploiter of motor-car producers and the author of “Capital” and other works of economic criticism. Now it appears that the Editor of the “New Leader” shares some, at least, of his Conservative colleague's fantasies.

In a recent article under the above heading, Mr. Brailsford emulates Mr. Garvin in seeking to delude his readers with the belief that Marx's analysis has (once more) been exploded, and his predictions falsified, because, forsooth, American capitalists have discovered how to make huge profits while paying high wages. We are told that the fundamental principle of capitalism according to Marx has been discarded. The new Capitalism has got rid of poverty, and Mr. Brailsford's sole remaining objection to it is that it is autocratic! He even refers to “the source of exploitation being closed,” but fails to reveal his meaning. Apparently, his mental outlook is so foggy that he imagines that the increased consumption of the workers keeps pace with their increased production. Yet it is obvious that if this were the case of the increased profits of the bosses would not exist.

Now the object of capitalist production is profit. Marx dealt fairly exhaustively with this fact, and no one yet has demonstrated the alleged error in his reasoning. He also showed that wages, like the prices of other commodities, were an extremely variable factor. Nowhere did he suggest that they could never rise; while he indicated, with exceptional clarity, the part played by machinery in intensifying the exploitation of higher-paid labour-power and reducing the proportion of the workers' share in the fruits of their labour.

In Ford's book (quoted by Mr. Brailsford) the secret of the higher profits obtained with higher wages is shown to lie in the application of machinery, while elsewhere in his article, the “New Leader's” editor refers to the fact that one-third of the American workers are below the poverty-line! Marx, therefore, would appear to have been exploded only in the imagination of Mr. Brailsford, and those who think like him.

In our pamphlet on “Socialism,” the point is dealt with at some length in Chapter III., but one example will serve here to illustrate it. Between 1899-1923, the number of cars per worker produced in the automobile industry had increased from 1.66 to 16.11. The output had multiplied by ten! Surely Mr. Brailsford does not imagine that the wages of the producers have been multiplied in anything like that proportion, either in actual money or in purchasing power! Yet, unless he does believe this, how can we explain his failure to see that the exploitation of the workers has been increased, and the gulf between them and their masters widened? Only by his utter ignorance of Marxian economics! E. B.

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### MATERIALISM v. SPIRITISM. A CRITICISM AND OUR REPLY.

9, Maybury Mansions,  
Weymouth Street, W.1.

Dear Comrade,

Someone kindly sent me a copy of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD yesterday containing your review of my pamphlet. As you have honoured me with a front page notice, I think you might have got the title of the pamphlet correct. It is, “Is Materialism the Basis of Communism?” Not “communism,” as you print it. And, by the way, if, as you say, the pamphlet contains its own refutation, why didn't THE STANDARD accept an advertisement of it?

Before criticising my facts you ought to have studied the subject with which I deal. But Socialists are too busy fighting one another to find time to inform themselves on new discoveries. They are still under the delusion the limits of the Knowable were fixed by Victorian science.

I believe a great revival of religion on a scientific basis to be imminent, and it is possible that spiritualism and theosophy, perhaps in alliance with a reformed Roman Catholicism, will sweep Socialism aside. As I think this would be a disaster, I am trying to get Socialists to recognise the importance of the great spiritualist movement, which is wholly proletarian in its origin.

Yours fraternally,

ISABEL KINGSLEY.

### REPLY TO ISABEL KINGSLEY.

The misprint of the title of Isabel Kingsley's pamphlet was so clearly a printer's error that it was not thought that anyone would be misled by it. The proof-reader has been suitably admonished. THE SOCIALIST STANDARD did not accept an advertisement of the pamphlet because the only advertisements we insert in THE SOCIALIST STANDARD are those of our own publications and announcements. As the review was placed on the front page it is rather difficult to see any reason for the authoress's complaint on this point.

It is interesting to note that Isabel Kingsley makes no attempt to meet the criticism of her pamphlet beyond the statement that I ought to have studied the subject with which she deals. This statement is entirely gratuitous. As a total stranger to myself Isabel Kingsley has no knowledge

whatever of my studies in any direction. But this “retort” is the usual one of the Spiritist, who finds his or her case demolished by a critical examination. Those who were present at the debate between Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Joseph McCabe will remember that when Conan Doyle's bubble of bluster had been coolly pricked, when his statements of supposed facts were shown to be wrong in every essential particular, his only reply was, “My opponent has not read the books, or if he has he doesn't understand them.”

This was too much for even the respectable audience of the Queen's Hall, and the protests from them led to one of Conan Doyle's usual shuffles. He gave another illustration of this habit when faced with the confession of the gentleman who arranged the “Masked Medium” illusion, that Conan Doyle claimed as an instance of an actual materialisation.

Equally gratuitous is the statement that Socialists “are still under the delusion the limits of the Knowable were fixed by Victorian Science.” Not a tittle of evidence is offered in support of this assertion, though it may be said in passing, that Victorian Science, with its names like Darwin, Tyndall, Huxley, Hemholtz, Spencer, etc., is certainly in advance of the archaic ideas of the ethnological period of savagery held by Isabel Kingsley.

The last paragraph of her letter supplies a key to Isabel Kingsley's attitude. A person who talks of religion having a “scientific basis” is evidently mentally incapable of understanding either science or religion.

The basis of all religion is the fear of the unknown; and all religions attempt to explain what the unknown is, and what occurs there. Here is the happy hunting ground of the wildest and most degrading superstitions, often accompanied by filthy rites and barbarous mutilations. A large section of the Spiritist movement openly claims that their views are those of a new religion.

Science is based upon knowledge and knowledge only. Observation, experiment, classification, generalisation, are its methods.

Such errors as occur are the usual human ones of faulty observation, incomplete experiments, or too hasty generalisations. But these errors are corrected as further knowledge is acquired and applied to the



various departments of science. No scientist places any definite limit upon the Knowable. All the scientist asks is that any claim to the extension of the Knowable must be based upon knowledge, not superstition.

And even if "the great spiritualist movement . . . is wholly proletarian in its origin"—a debatable point—it has not only wandered far from its "origin," but such "origin" does not excuse its superstitions any more than those of the other mental deficiencies around us.

Nor does Isabel Kingsley give us any information to show how a movement, based upon the ideas of primitive man plus the puerile conjuring tricks of "mediums," can be of any "importance" to Socialism—except as a stumbling block to be cleared out of the way.

The various attempts to foist crude superstitions, by those of limited or perverted mentalities, upon the Socialist movement, are evidences of the progress of Socialism, but such attempts must be fought and exposed.

J. FITZGERALD.

### THE CURRENCY QUESTION.

#### A READER'S QUESTIONS AND OUR REPLY.

Please find enclosed cuttings from the *Daily Herald*. You will notice they deal with the question of Currency.

As it is somewhat bewildering to me, I would like your opinion on the following questions. Being a reader of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD, I understand you hold the opinion that the Currency is not inflated or deflated. The *Daily Herald* states it is "Inflated." The *Financial News* states it is "Deflated." My questions are therefore:—

- (1) In what way are the above "Papers" wrong?
- (2) Do the working class have to pay the interest on War Loans, or National Debts?
- (3) Do the movements of Currency affect the workers' wages?
- (4) Is it a question of affecting prices of commodities in such a way as to lower the standard of living of the workers, or does it mean the exploitation of the working class is intensified.

If you could unravel the above what seems to me a most complexing problem, I feel sure it will help a good many people like myself out of the confusion

A. W. S.

#### ANSWER TO A.W.S.

The cuttings referred to in A.W.S.'s letter deal with a controversy between the financial expert of the *Daily Herald* and Mr. G. Bernard Shaw on the question of "Inflation" and "Depreciation" of the currency. The discussion is too long and too confused on both sides for summarising here. Moreover, A.W.S. did not send any cutting from the *Financial News*, so we are unaware of their particular argument. In one of the *Daily Herald* cuttings (undated) Mr. J. Lea, from Lancashire, puts some posers to both Bernard Shaw and the *Daily Herald* that, apparently, they were unable to answer.

The point actually in dispute was "What is the cause of the rise in prices during and since the war?" Mr. Shaw says the currency has been "depreciated" in value by the Government. The *Daily Herald* says the currency has been "inflated" by the Government. In itself the dispute between these two controversialists is largely a war of words and is of small concern to the workers. But it is interesting to note that both make the same claim—namely, that the chief cause of high prices is the tampering with the currency. This tale, invented by the agents of the master class to hide the truth about the huge profits made during the period mentioned, has been swallowed by the Labour Party, the *Daily Herald*, Bernard Shaw, etc., without the slightest examination as to its truth.

This question of the supposed "inflation of the currency" was dealt with in THE SOCIALIST STANDARD for December, 1921, and May, 1922, in a controversy with the *Plebs Magazine*; while the question of paper money and credit was worked out in answer to a correspondent in the June, 1922, issue. A.W.S. is referred to these issues for a fuller explanation, but, in the meantime, a brief answer to his questions may be useful.

(1) Both papers are wrong because they ignore, or deliberately attempt to hide, the facts. When the rise in prices began to cause unrest and suspicion among the workers they were told it was due to "high" wages. This was so obvious a lie that another excuse had to be invented, and so "inflation" was brought forward. A few facts will show the falsity of this excuse.

The amount of currency required for any

given period under normal conditions is determined by:—

- (1) The total of the prices of the commodities sold.
- (2) The rapidity with which each piece of currency (coin or note) circulates in the given period.
- (3) The difference between the debts falling due and the payments deferred in the period.

War was declared on Germany by Great Britain on Sunday night in the fateful August of 1914. On Monday morning people rushed to buy up supplies and prices began to rise at once, before any inflation could take place. As a matter of fact the new currency notes were not issued till some little time after. Prices continued to rise and more currency was, therefore, required to circulate the goods. All through the war the rises in prices preceded the increases in currency. In fact, as shown by the Cunliffe Committee, the total increase in prices was greater than the total increase in currency. These facts prove beyond dispute that no "inflation" of the currency had taken place.

(2) No. The working class, applying their labour-power to the materials provided by Nature, produce the wealth of modern society. But they do not own or control this wealth. Out of what they have produced there is handed back to them sufficient, on the average, to keep them in the state of efficiency desired by the master class. It is thus easily seen that the working class cannot pay interest on war loans or National Debt, nor can they pay taxes in general. These expenses are paid out of the share of the wealth retained by the capitalist class, technically termed "surplus value."

(3) It depends upon the character of the movements. To take an illustration. When in Germany the fall of credit was followed by a huge inflation of the paper currency, the rises in prices, due to this movement, were far more rapid than the rate at which the workers were able to force up wages. The result was that the workers suffered a continual reduction in real wages—that is wages measured by their purchasing power. This is an extreme case, but the principle applies generally. In "Value, Price and Profit," Marx refers to this point in the middle of the nineteenth century.

In the early years of the present century the new processes applied to the production of gold reduced the amount of labour power required to produce each ounce, and so lowered the value of gold. This was shown in the general rise in prices—how trivial these seem compared with our war and post-war experiences—followed by various efforts to raise wages. In other words, when a movement of currency affects prices it then affects wages, but, in general, this is the only way in which it does so.

Ed. Com.

### YANKEE PROSPERITY.

The New York correspondent of the *Daily News* quotes from a report issued by the National Catholic Welfare Conference of America to show the falsity of many of the extravagant tales of high wages said to be paid to workers in the U.S.A. We give below an extract from the Report (*Daily News*, November 17th):

The chorus of voices proclaiming that because of high wages we can now look forward to the indefinite continuation of prosperity misses several plain facts.

High wages are not nearly so common as is assumed. Great numbers of men are making as low as three and four dollars a day. Great numbers of women are making as low as 12, 13, and 14 dollars a week. Great numbers of both men and women are out of work and are making no money at all.

The level of wages is higher now than at any time in the past, but even now close upon half of the men working for wages are not making a family living wage, and close upon half of the women working for wages are not making enough to support themselves in reasonable comfort.

Great numbers of men and women working for a weekly or monthly salary are below the line of reasonable existence, and still greater numbers have not shared proportionately in the increased productiveness of American industry and agriculture.

Farmers are a third of the consuming public, and their buying power has actually decreased in the last seven years. Along with low-paid wage and salaried workers in cities they stand as a handicap to city prosperity, and a sure cause of inevitable industrial depression in this country.

Much of the phenomenal selling of goods at home is based on instalment buying by wage and salaried workers, who are mortgaging an essentially insecure future to buy goods now.

Those who saw in America an example of the way in which a more efficient capitalism abolishes working class poverty will need to continue their search for a "prosperous" working class.

H.



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- GLASGOW.**—Communications to Sec., J. Higgins, 816, Rutherglen-rd., Oatlands, Glasgow.
- HACKNEY.**—Branch meets Saturdays, 7 p.m. at The Old Gravel Pit Hall, Mare Street, Hackney. Discussions after Branch Business. Communications to Secretary at above address.
- HANLEY.**—Branch meets Tuesdays, Working Men's Club, Glass-st. Communications to Sec., F. Goldstraw, 38, Paddock St., Hanley, Staffs. Open to all.
- HULL.**—Branch meetings, Sunday, at 3 p.m., at the Trade and Labour Club (Jarratt Street entrance). Discussion after meeting. All readers in Hull requested to attend. Communications to Sec., G. Vinecrad, 40, Brook Street, Hull.
- ISLINGTON.**—Branch meets Wednesdays, 8.30, at 144 Seven Sisters-rd., Holloway, N. Communications to N. A. Bishop, 39, Poyninge-rd., N.19.
- LEYTON.**—Communications to A. Holland, 396, Lea Bridge-rd., Leyton. Branch meets 8 p.m., Trades and Labour Hall, Grove House, High-rd., every Monday. Public invited.
- PADDINGTON.**—Branch meets alternate Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at Emanuel Church Hall, Harrow Road, near "The Prince of Wales." Communications to G. Shears, 200, Shirland Road, Paddington, W.9.
- SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.**—Communications to Sec., J. Bird, 5 Wellington-avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea.
- TOOTING.**—Sec., A. Yeomans, 15, University-rd., Collier's Wood, S.W.19. Branch meets every Thursday at 8 p.m.
- TOTTENHAM.**—Secretary 22, Dunloe-road, N.15. Branch meets Fridays, The Trades Hall, 7, Bruce grove, Tottenham. Discussion after branch business. Public invited.
- WALTHAMSTOW.**—Communications to S. E. Williams, 3, Dyson-rd., Leytonstone, E.11. Branch meets at Workmen's Hall, High-st., every Monday.
- WATFORD.**—A. Lawson, Sec., 107 Kensington-avenue, Watford. Branch meets Thursdays at 8.30 p.m. No. 1 Room, Labour Club, Clarendon Road.
- WEST HAM.**—Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at 167 Romford rd., Stratford. Communications to P. Hallard, 22 Colegrave-rd., Stratford, E.
- WOOD GREEN.**—Branch meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 8 p.m., at Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY  
OF GREAT BRITAIN.

## OBJECT.

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

## Declaration of Principles.

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain

## HOLDS—

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind, without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

The SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.